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ABSTRACT

This conference sought to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas on how parents, teachers, and other concerned individuals can contribute to strengthening the educational support system, and sought to generate practical information on strategies to improve achievement levels of youth. A conference program prospectus by Louise M. Tomlinson offers a rationale for the conference, describes the conference structure, and notes its intended outcome as a program model to be replicated elsewhere in Georgia. Conference presentations include: "Teachers Facilitating Parent Support: How Does It Begin?" (Theresa M. Bey); "Parent Talk Through the Mail" (Loretta Konecki); "Makin' a Life: Parenting in Families of Color" (Barbara K. Mullins); "Reading Depends on Experiences and Opportunities To Talk about Those Experiences" (Michelle Commeyras); "ABCs of Parenthood" (Evelyn C. Neely); "School Climate: The Empowerment of Parents, Students and Teachers" (Ronald A. Harper); "An Education Prescription for Each Child" (J. Vincent Cook); "UNITE: Understanding Needs: Integrating Team Efforts/Services and Collaborating Agencies and the School" (Carrie Gantt); "Mediating Columbus' Legacy for the Bilingual Hispanic Child: A Parent's Concerns" (Duncan Waite); "Health Issues for Adolescents" (Eric Wilson); "Parental Involvement in Preventing Teen Pregnancy" (Rick Dunn); "Teens and Drugs" (Robyn McDonald); "Court Intervention" (Steven C. Jones); "Addressing the Needs of At-Risk Girls" (Lois Thomas-Wright); "Mirrors and Crystal Balls: How Mentoring Helps Our Children" (Trudy Bradley); "Personal Development through Showing Girls How To Show" (Denise Mitchell); and "Character Development from a Church Perspective" (Andre Grier). Outlines for a task force discussion on home-school partnerships and a task force discussion on community-school networks conclude the proceedings. Some papers contain references. (JDD)

ED 381 495

THE IMPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL NETWORK: Parents, Teachers, and Concerned Individuals

Volume 4

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The Imperative Educational Network Conference 1992

Volume 4

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THE IMPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL NETWORK PROGRAM PROSPECTUS

Louise M. Tomlinson, Ph.D.
University of Georgia

In response to the call for parent involvement in the education of our youth that has been recognized by educational leaders at local, state, and national levels, as well as the need for a synergetic relationship between parents, teachers, and tutors of our immediate communities, we propose a conference addressing the theme of **"Preparing Our Youth for the 21st Century"** to be supported by community service agencies, the public school system, and continuing higher education.

Rationale

Statistics on the educational achievement of the youth of our nation and forecasts of the capability of the nation to deal with future challenges all indicate that our educational support systems need to be strengthened. The greatest declines in educational achievement among youth can be found in the minority populations; African-Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians, and particularly among black males (Wilson and Carter, 1988). These current statistics pose an imminent threat to the future well being of our nation when, "between 1985 and 2000, minority workers will make up one-third of the net additions to the U.S. labor force" and "by the turn of the century, 21.8 million of the 140.4 million people in the labor force will be non-white (The Commission on Minority Participation in Education and American Life 1988).

It should also be noted that this decline in the educational

achievement levels of our youth is just as well a non-minority problem, as evidenced by a recent and intensive analysis of the economic performance and future of our country. The analysis reemphasizes a conclusion of the 1983 National Commission on Excellence in Education that "for the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one generation will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach, those of their parents" (Peterson, 1987). No doubt, this statement holds implications for non-minorities, since, to date, minority youth have continued to exceed their parents' educational achievement levels for the aggregate. Peterson goes on to cite the prediction of a study by the Committee for Economic Development that, "without major educational change, by the year 2000 we will have turned out close to 20 million young people with no productive place in our society."

How will this affect us? The consequences of the current adult employment force will be manifest when "by the year 2030, there will be about 50 Social Security beneficiaries per 100 workers" and "the work force of that time will include a much higher percentage of minority workers" (The Commission on Minority Participation in Education and American Life, 1988).

What can we do? It is time to recognize that the problems cannot be solved simply within the framework of legislators and administrators who trust each other to make informed decisions. It is time to recognize that well-intentioned programs cannot be optimally succesful without the support of the parents who send their children into the school systems. Parents must be informed of how they can help teachers, and teachers of how they can help parents to support the youth of our nation. Rather than the traditional focus on education from the top of a hierarchy wherein

legislators, the media, school boards and administrators pass decisions down to teachers, students and parents, the hierarchy of influence and responsibility needs to be reversed. Importance must be placed on the voices and needs of parents, students, and teachers who can guide and inform decisions made by the other members of the hierarchical base (Koppman, 1989).

Many states in the nation have responded to the need for parent education and involvement in the educational process of youth through specially sponsored programs at all levels. For instance, in the state of Wisconsin there are intensive efforts to support the role of the family in education through ongoing programs initiated by the Department of Public Instruction. Their efforts were launched in the 1987-88 school year which was dubbed the "year of the Family in Education" and participation was recruited from business and industry, the media, education interest groups, human service agencies, higher education, and community residents. In the state of Georgia, local examples of related efforts are evident in programs such as the Barnett Shoals Elementary School's "Super Saturday" project in Athens, initiated four years ago to strengthen the relationship between families, staff and community and the creation of a Student Support Services program, in the Clarke County School District Office, to provide intervention for students "at risk" through the efforts of a multidisciplinary staff.

In keeping with the need for greater emphasis on the parent in the educational network, we propose a conference launched by the efforts of the Imperative Educational Network, the support of the Clarke County School District Office, and the Georgia Center for Continuing Education.

Goals
The goals of the conference program are to:

- demonstrate an interest in parent participation in the exchange of ideas between community support services, the educational agencies, and higher education

- provide a forum for the exchange of ideas relevant to how parents and teachers and other concerned individuals can contribute to the strengthening of the educational support system

- generate practical information on strategies to improve the achievement levels of our youth

Intended Outcomes
The intended outcomes of the conference program are:

- enhanced interest and appreciation for the complexity of the challenge of parent/teacher relationships

- useful exchange of relevant ideas for parents and teachers to put into practice

- initiation of an exchange that will continue

- achievement of a program model that can be replicated throughout the state

General Process - Program Schedule
The conference program will be structured by the following format:

The National Issues Forum will be facilitated by moderators trained by the Kettering Foundation who will guide participants through discussion of a national issue in such a way that they identify a range of realistic alternatives and move toward a choice; make a good case for those positions they dislike as well as the position they like, and consider choices they have not considered before; understand that others have reasons for their choices and that their reasons are interesting, not dumb, unreasonable or immoral; realize that their own knowledge is not complete until they understand why others feel the way they do about choices; consider the underlying values of each choice; and, leave the Forum "stewing" over the choices.

The Concurrent Sessions will facilitate invited presenters who can share practical information on the topics identified. For each topic, a panel of three presenters will be arranged to provide diversity and comprehensive scope.

The Task Force Sessions will utilize invited discussion leaders to facilitate the group exchange of practical approaches to addressing identified needs and issues. Each discussion leader will be assisted by a recorder who will take notes to be presented at the Closing Session. (A majority of participants will be preassigned--by their choice--to each session.)

The Closing Session will facilitate the presentation of Task Force recommendations and the enlistment or announcement of follow-up activities (such as a series of National Issues Forums study circles on another related

issue--to be conducted at church sites in the surrounding community).

Desired Participation

The conference program will recruit parents, teachers, tutors, teacher educators, students of education, school administrators, and administrators and staff of community support service programs to be a part of its audience. The core of the parent participants will be from the Athens and Atlanta area and other participants will represent statewide and regional participation.

Desired Follow-Up Activity

The conference program hopes to generate activity beyond the program day. On a long-term basis, it is hoped that this program continues to be annual. On a short-term basis it is hoped that some of the following involvement will be generated:

- local task force sessions conducted by school and community agencies throughout the state

- teleconferences, forums, or study circles during the year to continue to explore relevant issues

- publication of proceedings of the conference for selected distribution

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TEACHERS FACILITATING PARENT SUPPORT: HOW DOES IT BEGIN?

Theresa M. Bey, Ph.D.
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Teacher efforts to build parent support should be based on the reality that children learn at school and home. Ideally, teachers are likely to prefer students who will consume and use positive learning behaviors despite what is learned at home. Whatever is considered to be in the best interest of the child, teachers must remember that parents do send the best (child) that they have to school. In addition, parents tend to want the education children need for life to be the school's responsibility. It is a demanding responsibility requiring teachers to facilitate parent support, so how should they begin? **Listed below are a few practical suggestions.**

1. Call or write parents regularly to inform them about their child's academic performance and behavior.
2. On occasion, mail a personal handwritten letter/note to parents, because form letters are an impersonal means of conveying information.
3. Make parents feel comfortable at school and at parent-teacher conferences by using language and words that they can understand.
4. Invite parents to visit the school building while classes are in session to shadow their son or daughter and see

what the school climate is like during the day.

5. Schedule time for home visits and visits to various neighborhoods to see where students live.
6. Include special messages to parents in classroom and school newsletters, school handbook and report cards.

What Are Teachers Experiencing?

Every school is unique and in some places the teachers' biggest problem is not parent involvement but the shortage of personnel, especially in schools where funds for additional salaries are lacking. Also, funds for physical maintenance of schools in some communities are limited. Without adequate revenue, school facilities are decaying in cities throughout the country. A former teacher (Kozol, 1991) visited low-income schools in East St. Louis, New York, San Antonio, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Camden, New Jersey. He found them in poor condition; drinking fountains didn't work, toilets didn't flush, furnaces didn't function, 15 year old history books still in use and computers that melted from the heat. He reported on these and other sad events in an attempt to have parents understand how deprived environments defeat the mission to educate children.

No matter what the conditions of a school might be, teachers are expected to address the emotional, social and physical needs of students. In addition, they must be knowledgeable about the moral, linguistic and cognitive development of children, as these areas are critical to learning. James Comer (1988), a prominent professor of child psychiatry, believes that the poor academic performance of low SES minority children is caused by failure to bridge the social and cultural gap between school and home.

Comer's work shows that the educational development of students is strongly affected by the attitudes, values, and behavior of the family and its social network. Nevertheless, young children from poor families enter school ready to learn, but the school is not adequately prepared for them. A conflict exists between the children's readiness and the school's expectations. Obviously, this conflict between home and school can cause children to feel confused, alienated or rejected. Even more damaging is the erosion of the self-concept. Children learn at an early age what it is like to be rejected or excluded by their teachers and, in some cases, by their classmates.

In some households, parents may not read or write, speak fluent English, be employed or have a positive outlook on life. Poor home conditions are not an excuse for a teacher to assume that parents will not help focus their children's attention on the benefits of schooling. The extent to which parents accept an invitation from the school to supervise the learning progress of their children is affected by the encouragement they receive from teachers and administrators (Rosenholtz, 1987).

In communicating with parents about children's learning successes and failures, a teacher needs to seek advice about home visits, parent-teacher conferences and schoolcommunity relations. Such advice is helpful prior to contacting parents by mail or phone in an attempt to establish channels of communication. When parents communicate with the school on a regular basis and advocate the importance of schooling, their children will have more positive attitudes toward school, regardless of the parents' ethnicity, socio-economic, work or marital status (Epstein, 1987). Also, when parents are involved in

helping their children or look for solutions to parenting problems, they have respect for the teacher's hard work and expertise. This respect is important, as it increases the teacher's sense of professional efficacy and commitment to teaching (Epstein, 1986).

Ordinarily, teaching is a meaningful profession, but it is meaningless when parents show no respect for the teacher's professional preparation and ability. Should a teacher experience disappointment with parents and their children, he or she is likely to feel helpless. Especially, if it leads to conflict or tension with school administrators. This causes the teacher to become more frustrated with the parents. Also, ". . . if teachers perceive that parents do not support or appreciate their efforts, the nature of work may seem, and may be, less controllable and beyond their capacity to succeed. And . . . teachers will blame their lack of teaching success on parents and students . . . (Rosenholtz, 1987, p. 28)." At times, teachers may find it difficult not to blame students for the discouragement they suffer when parents fail to cooperate. Holding students accountable for the responsibilities their parents overlook or deliberately avoid is not an alternative. Whatever the circumstances, teachers' should expect children to learn, and be willing to facilitate parent support.

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PARENT TALK THROUGH THE MAIL

Loretta Konecki, Ph.D.
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It is a pleasure to be able to share information about **PARENT TALK**. Five topics will be addressed: (1) what **PARENT TALK** is, (2) how **PARENT TALK** originated, (3) the theoretical background for the project, (4) preliminary results that indicate how **PARENT TALK** recipients feel about it, and (5) future directions for **PARENT TALK**.

What Is PARENT TALK?

PARENT TALK is a check-sized newsletter being distributed to almost 10,000 recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in Kent County (Grand Rapids area), Michigan along with their assistance checks. This pilot project has been carried out by members of the Grand Rapids Chapter 1027 of Phi Delta Kappa (PDK), students and staff at Grand Valley State University, public school educators and the Kent County Department of Social Services (DSS).

PARENT TALK is designed to help families relate to schools and help them facilitate their children's learning. Topics included in **PARENT TALK** range from information on parent teacher conferences to how babies learn.

How Did PARENT TALK Originate?

PARENT TALK came about as the result of the emphasis Phi Delta Kappa International gave to studying and addressing the needs of at-risk children during 1988-89. As a follow-up on this national effort, local agency and educational leaders were asked for ideas that might promote children's success in life and school. The ideas were presented at a forum for Phi Delta Kappa members and local educators. One of the ideas identified by the Director of Kent County Department of Social Services was that of providing information to families on how to relate to schools or facilitate children's learning. The initial goal was to find ways to communicate with families that do not come to schools for conferences or for parent-teacher groups.

The Department of Social Services indicated that it was willing to disseminate information to recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. It was decided to initiate a pilot project that shares information through a check-sized newsletter included in the envelopes with assistance checks sent to area families who receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The ideas for **PARENT TALK** were coordinated by local Phi Delta Kappa members working with the local office of the Department of Social Services. Additional copies also were distributed by area agencies serving families and children, schools, and Kent Regional Community Coordinated Child Care.

What Is The Theoretical Background For This Project?

Families contribute extensively to the development and achievement of children (Scott-Jones, 1984). One of the increasing family patterns is the economically

disadvantaged family with children. Many of these poor families are made up of young, single mothers and families with adults who are out of work. By cooperating with the Department of Social Services, it is hoped that some of the educational needs of children and adults in these families might be addressed.

Peterson (1992, B 8) suggests that "parents have only until age 8 to help steer a child one way or the other" in becoming optimistic or pessimistic about life and his or her abilities. Peterson suggests that parents who want to encourage optimism in their children should strive for consistency in their expectations, rewards and punishments. If parents are inconsistent, it tends to teach children that they cannot believe others. Thurmond Evans, M.D. (October 27, 1992) indicated in his speech to Muskegon, Michigan area business persons, youth and parents that little is accomplished by a pessimist and much is accomplished by optimists. Thus, he encourages parents and teachers to teach children how to be optimistic even when situational circumstances mitigate against it.

The understanding that families play a crucial role in educating children, provides the basis for the first of the nation's goals (U. S. Department of Education, 1991). The educational goals for the year 2000 include goals for having every child ready to learn when they come to school, for reducing the drop-out rate, for increasing student performance and literacy, and for drug free schools. These goals are admirable. However, the schools cannot do the job alone. America 2000 recognizes that families and communities are needed to support children in their learning. Despite the need for educators, families and communities to become united in providing support for the

education of children and youth, this is not easy to achieve (Cohen, 1992).

Since educators must reach out to new partners in advocacy for children and their learning, educators must find new ways to foster communication between teachers, schools, parents and the community. Many models for reaching out to parents and the community have been tried and are being used in communities. School districts are sending newsletters to all residents within the district. School and business partnerships, grandparent programs, homework hot lines, school and community planning groups, and senior lunch programs are just a few of the ways schools are reaching into the community to gain support. Some states, including Michigan, have legislated that schools attempt to increase parent participation in parent-teacher conferences and school activities that foster learning.

Increased interaction with and support of communities and families was one of the suggestions resulting from the 1989-90 study of pupils at-risk of failure in school or society conducted by members of Phi Delta Kappa throughout the United States (Framer & Gansneder, 1989). In their review of the literature, they found that a majority of the factors indicating that a child might be considered at-risk of failure, were not school related (Framer et al, 1989). When discussing the study, Barber (1989) suggested that educators might better address the problems of children at-risk by getting involved with agencies in the community which serve children and families to mobilize resources to provide support for children and learning. **PARENT TALK** is an attempt to initiate just such a cooperative effort on behalf of children.

What Do Recipients Think Of PARENT TALK?

Evaluating the effectiveness of **PARENT TALK** has been difficult. The initial attempt was to include a mailing address for recipients to send in their questions. To date, we have received two letters--each asking for more help and wondering if there were support groups they could attend.

To gain more information from recipients regarding how they felt about **PARENT TALK**, we had a Michigan Occupational Skills Training (MOST) counselor collect data at two sites from AFDC recipients who participate in that program. Four sets of data were collected in November 1991 from a total of 38 persons and five sets from January 30 to February 13, 1992 from 63 additional persons. Preliminary results are very rewarding. Of the 105 AFDC participants in MOST that were asked to respond to the PARENT TALK survey, 101 responded, which is 96% response rate.

Of those 101 respondents 72 persons (71%) checked that they received **PARENT TALK**, 26 persons (26%) indicated that they did not receive it, while 3 were unsure. It is very possible that not all MOST participants did receive **PARENT TALK** as MOST draws its clients from all aid recipients, not just AFDC. Fifty-nine persons indicated that they received **PARENT TALK** in their checks, 4 indicated they received if from a school, and 6 from a friend, three persons did not respond to this question. Of the 72 persons who indicated that they had received **PARENT TALK**, 64 (89%) indicated that they read it. Only 8 persons (11%) responded that they did not read it.

Of the 64 persons who both received and read

PARENT TALK, 53 (83%) checked that the information in **PARENT TALK** was helpful to them, while 11 persons (17%) indicated that it was not helpful to them (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Recipients Who Read **PARENT TALK** and Found It Helpful

53 Readers found **PARENT TALK** Helpful = 83 %
11 Readers did not find it Helpful = 17 %

N = 64 **PARENT TALK** Readers

Upon a closer look at the respondents who did not find it helpful, it was observed that a number of them were parents of young children and a majority of the information in the issues of **PARENT TALK** which they received had focused on parents of school aged children. Topics had been homework, parent-teacher conferences, how to help your child be successful in school. Thirty-eight (38) respondents had no children of school age (elementary, middle school, or high school). Thus, these topics might not be considered helpful.

Both individuals who received and did not receive **PARENT TALK** provided information as to what type of information might be helpful. Child development was checked by 50 persons; 43 checked information on nutrition, health and safety; 40 checked information on community services; 37 checked information on school; and 32 checked information on play, games, toys (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Information MOST Respondents Felt Would Be Helpful

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Play, games, toys	32
Child development	50
School	37
Nutrition, health, safety	43
Community services	40

N = 101 Respondents

NOTE: Some respondents checked more than one category.

Seventy-three (73) respondents indicated that **PARENT TALK** would be helpful to others. Five (5) persons thought it would not be helpful.

Preliminary data indicate that **PARENT TALK** is useful to parents. Parents also suggest that they would like to have more information on a variety of topics.

In addition to the evaluations of recipients, we sought and have received information from professionals regarding its content. **PARENT TALK** has been given high praise by educators, social service workers, child care providers, and health care personnel.

One of the surprising comments has been that the size and limited number of lines on **PARENT TALK** make

it more likely to be read than full page newsletters. Respondents suggest that the size also makes it easy to post issues you want to keep on the refrigerator.

Suggestions for making sure the vocabulary and reading level were not too difficult, finding multicultural graphics, and translating some issues into Spanish are being addressed as feasible.

What Is The Future Of PARENT TALK?

The Michigan Department of Social Services may distribute **PARENT TALK** to all AFDC recipients throughout the state. Phi Delta Kappa International is suggesting that information be made available to all PDK chapters so they can work with local agencies to distribute **PARENT TALK**. In Kent County, age level sets (infant, toddler, preschool) have been developed for Kent Regional Community Coordinated Child Care (4C) to distribute to child care providers and parents seeking child care.

Because of the value attributed to **PARENT TALK** by parents and educators, and at the request of the Kent County Department of Social Services and Kent Regional Community Coordinated Child Care, AdultChild Connections (ACC) has been formed to disseminate **PARENT TALK** beyond the area of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Through ACC it will be possible to gain a license to print issues of **PARENT TALK**, to purchase issues or to have new issues developed. Issues can be custom designed using articles and graphics presently available. Each issue contains 2 to 4 articles and at least one graphic or child's drawing. Some can be customized to include phone numbers of local resources. To gain more information or a listing of article topics presently available, contact Adult-Child Connections, 2153 Wealthy Street, #

266, Grand Rapids, MI 49506-3033 or FAX (616) 241-6343.

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PARENT TALK

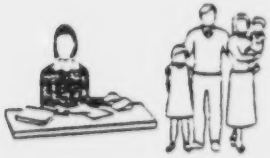
PDH/dG

READING

- Reading to young children is important. Children who have been read to at home, read better when they get to school.
- By reading to children, you show them that reading can be fun. You also are teaching them about books--turning pages.
- It helps to have books around for children to look at and "read."
- Libraries have books for children and babies. Most librarians will help you find good books for children.
- Some libraries have story hours one morning each week for young children 2 to 5 years old.

Appendix A: PARENT TALK Sample Front

PARENT TALK



PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES
WAYS TO GET THE MOST FROM THEM

1. Think about what you want to find out.
2. Prepare some questions to ask the teacher.
   - How is my child doing in class?
   - Does my child use time well?
   - Does my child get along with others?
   - Does my child turn in homework?
3. Talk with your child before going to school
   - What does he or she thinks the teacher will say?
   - What problems may the teacher talk about?
   - What areas does your child enjoy?
4. Ask the teacher to explain anything you don't understand
5. Be prepared to talk and listen to the teacher
6. Follow-up on any questions you have or problem areas

PARENT TALK

BABY & YOUNG CHILDREN EDITION

PLAY IS THE WORK OF CHILDREN

- Play helps children learn many things:
  - how the world works
  - cooperation
  - problem solving skills
  - creative thinking
  - socialization
- Children's play changes as they get older.
  - For babies, play begins with the mouth, tongue, & voice, & continues with the senses & movement.
  - Toddlers pretend by copying things others do. Making movements, dancing, building and knocking down blocks, pretending, collecting and gathering things to keep are fun for toddlers. Play helps children deal with their feelings.
  - School-age children use their imaginations, and play with others for fun (and learning).
  - As children get older, play becomes more formal.
  - Children's ability to play together takes time.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PARENT TALKPARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES
WAYS TO GET THE MOST FROM THEM

1. Think about what you want to find out.

2. Prepare some questions to ask the
   How is my child doing in class?
   Does my child use time well?
   Does my child get along with others?
   Does my child turn in homework?

3. Talk with your child before going to
   What does he or she think the teacher will say?
   What problems may the teacher talk about
   What areas doe your child enjoy

4. Ask the teacher to explain anything you
   don't understand

5. Be prepared to talk and listen to the teacher

6. Follow-up on any questions you have or
   problem area

Appendix B: **PARENT TALK** Article Topics

1. PARENTS: The Most Important Teachers Children Have
2. Things Young Children Like to Do
3. Parent Idea Corner
4. Things Parents Can Do to Help a Child Be Successful in School
5. A Parent's Pledge
6. Benefits of Parent Involvement in Schools
7. Things Parents Can Do at Home To Help Their Children Learn
8. DISCIPLINE TIPS
9. Possible Rules
10. Handling Misbehavior of Young Children
11. FRIENDS: Get to Know Your Child's Friends
12. Relationships Between Children, Friends and Parents
13. Stopping Friendships
14. LISTENING: Ways to Encourage Good Listening Habits
15. What is Listening?
16. Listening Games for Younger Children
17. Encouraging Children to Be Positive
18. Family Talk: Talking is Important, but Not All Talk Is Helpful
19. Family Talk 2: Talking to Help Prevent Problems
20. MOVING: Children Do Better When Things Are the Same
21. Moving Can Cause Problems for Children
22. Helping Your Child if You Have to Move
23. HOMEWORK
24. Facing a Problem at School

25. PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES: Ways to Get The Most From Them
26. Questions to Ask at Parent-Teacher Conferences
27. High School Conferences
28. CHILD CARE
29. Providing Child Care
30. Things You Can Expect from a Child Care Provider
31. Things a Child Care Provider Can Expect from You
32. HAPPY, HEALTHY CHILDREN LEARN BEST
33. Ideas For Good Nutrition
34. Avoiding Colds and the Flu
35. When Children Are Ill
36. First Aid Review
37. Outdoor Safety
38. Helping Young Children Get Ready to Read
39. Tips for Reading Aloud to Young Children
40. Going to the Library (Lists 1 or 2 Library Phone #'a.)
41. Reading
42. SUMMER READING
43. SUMMER: A Time for Fun and Learning
44. Math Counts for Future Success
45. Everyday Math
46. Ways to Help Children in Math
47. Twelve Alternatives to Hitting Your Child
48. Before You Raise Your Hand in Anger
49. Problem Solving
50. The Gift of Self Esteem
51. Ideas to Promote Self Esteem
52. Becoming Skillful
53. Ideas for Children's TV Watching
54. Things to Do Instead of Watching TV
55. More things to Do Instead of Watching TV

56. When a Family Crisis Strikes
57. Helping Children Cope With a Family Crisis
58. Sources of Help in Times of Crisis (Lists 2-6 local hot lines)
59. Thinking About the Future: Education & Careers Literacy Info. #)
60. "Being There": A Key to Success
61. Do You Want to Go Back to School? (School or GED Phone #)
62. The New Baby
63. We're Going to Have a New Baby
64. Ways to Introduce a New Baby to a Toddler
65. How Babies and Young Children Learn
66. Activities to Help Babies Learn
67. Playthings to Help Babies Learn
68. Play is the Work of Children
69. Encouraging Positive Play
70. Games for Babies
71. Traveling with Baby
72. Learning to Sit Up
73. Toys
74. Crying
75. Crying Babies
76. Ways to Stop Crying
77. First Friends: Everyone Wants to Make and Have Friends
78. Places to Meet Friends
79. Kinds of Children's Play
80. Toddler Talk
81. Teaching Children to Talk
82. Talking with Babies
83. In the High Chair

84. First Food Ideas
85. Foods to Avoid
86. Shopping with Toddlers
87. Fun Shopping Trips
88. Dealing with Tantrums in Stores
89. Toddler Tunes
90. Fun Songs for Young Children
91. Movements to Music
92. Temper Tantrums
93. How to Prevent Temper Tantrums
94. How to Handle Tantrums
95. TLC...Toilet Learning Considerations
96. Signs of Being Ready to Use the Bathroom
97. Helpful Hints for Toilet Training
98. ROUGH AND SMOOTH: Learning About Texture
99. Using Rough and Smooth Objects to Make Things

MAKIN' A LIFE:
PARENTING IN FAMILIES OF COLOR

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I make sure that my grandchil'ren don't slip' between the culture of this thing, whatever it is that young people is goin' through, you know. I feel like the parents, some of the parents can save an preserve their chil'ren. Some of 'em can't. Because it's a lot of 'em into partyin' and goin' but I feel that when you git a certain age it's time for you to leave that alone and be in tune with makin' a life for your chil'ren. But even it it's not your chil'ren, it's your grandchil'ren. See where in my case I'm talkin' about my grandchil'ren.

Ms. Netha

Ms. Netha is one of five women of color who talked to me about their experiences as parents. Each of the women are employed at the Bond Community Health Clinic in Tallahassee, Florida. Bond serves low-income clients in a predominantly African American neighborhood. During our conversations the women detailed, in story form, the strategies and skills they use as parents. I observed the ways in which the women serve members of the community who are patients at the clinic. One of the most important resources for the women, their children and patients is the church. Although only a few highlights of

the study can be presented here, I believe they are sufficient to demonstrate how the women's experiences, recounted in their stories, offer educators valuable insight into the African American community--insight that can strengthen ties between communities, schools and families.

Interviews: listening to their stories

I met and talked to each of the women frequently over the period of one year. Usually our conversations took place at the clinic, during office hours. What they told me frequently took the form of a story. Story-telling is a way to redistribute the balance of power from a traditional interview where the interviewer controls the process to one in which the participant becomes empowered. Parents talked about what was important to them rather than what was important to me, the interviewer. Story-telling gives voice to participants--the stories are in their own words and the women decided which stories would be printed in the final text.

From time to time our conversations were interrupted by a telephone call or a request from a co-worker. These interruptions added a rich perspective to the stories. Such a perspective would not have been gained had the interviews been conducted in isolated offices or at a coffee shop after working hours. In addition to the women's stories about their relationships with their own children and families I observed interactions between the women as they worked together in the clinic and between the women and the parents and children who visited the clinic.

When I began the interviews I intended to focus on the women's roles as educators in their families--that is the people with whom they live. However, what I observed at the clinic caused me to revise my original plan as well as

my understanding about African American families and communities. What I discovered was that "makin' a life" for children is a responsibility that is shared by adults in the African American community.

The parent network

As I observed the women at work in the clinic, it became obvious that they clearly supported and encouraged one another and second, they talked to children who were patients almost as if they were their own children. After one child became impatient and spoke to his mother with disrespect, Ms. Netha, the clinic receptionist told me: I sit in here sometimes and the chil'ren, 12, 13, 14, sometimes younger than that be hollin', "I'm ready to go! You ain't seen the doctor yet?" They talkin' to they momma. I say, "Who you talkin' to?" They look at me. I say "That's right!" They momma don't say nothin'. I say "Uh, uh. You don't talk like that to yo momma. You got to leave here." She say "I know that lady goin' to get ya." It is clear from this incident that Ms. Netha feels it is her responsibility to assist the child's mother by offering the admonishment.

In many white middle-class families, parents prefer to discipline their own children and expect other parents to keep their own children in line. It would not be unusual for one of these parents to become upset should someone other than a child's own parents attempt to discipline him or her. There were many other ways in which the women supported one another. The clinic is part of a "holistic" system of raising children. Dr. Joshi, a family physician at the clinic, described her choice to work at Bond as reflecting her desire to work at a clinic where she could do more than just give a prescription. In addition to treatments for physical conditions, Dr. Joshi and the staff at Bond

continually offer spiritual and emotional advice to patients.

Although the women are not "licensed" counselors they possess qualities that are often associated with persons of such a profession. Ms. Netha has a rapport with parents and their children that gives her great credibility. Establishing rapport with patients and understanding them is an important part of the communication required to effectively and efficiently meet the health needs of patients of limited resources.

Talkin' their talk

One of the techniques that Ms. Net ha described as helping facilitate such a rapport was being able to "talk their talk". During a conversation with Ms. Netha, I saw just how adept she was at being able to adjust her talk to fit the situation. When I arrived at the clinic to see Ms. Netha, she told me she was probably going to have to cancel our appointment. She was trying to tie up some loose ends before going away for a week on vacation. When I asked her where she was going on vacation she resdponded "church'in."

Not understanding her and without pausing or thinking, I said. "Excuse me?" She replied, "I'm goin' to a church conference." As soon as she realized I had not understood her "black" response, she switched to a "standard" phrase. Anthropologist John Gwaltney (1980) called this switching "cultivated ease." In a pilot interview, Marilyn, an African American colleague described reactions to her children's use of standard English: I tried to teach my children that the real world is like a rainbow. I want them to learn reality and how to live with people. Some of my kids' behavior caused relatives to say "You think you're white! Why you talkin' like that?" You

know--if they were using correct subject verb agreement, not black dialect. Children learn early how to adjust their conversation for the situation. By the time they are adults they may be so adept at it they may scarcely realize they do it. During the last decade educators have increasingly become sensitive to demands that they acknowledge the diversity of our country's people. Although "standard" English has long been held as the ideal, educators are now beginning to recognize variations of the language as legitimate (Baron, 1992).

Makin' a way outa no way

Marsha, the nurse educator at the clinic, described her job as "makin' a way outa no way." Using an African tradition, Marsha used this proverb to teach me about her role as a nurse educator at Bond. Proverbs have long been recognized for their ability to engender critical thinking and analytical skills (Daniel, Donaldson & Jeremiah, 1987). This African proverb succinctly portrays the women's role in the clinic, providing care for low-income patients.

Marsha explained how she helps the patients: "...get in there and teach somebody, keeping in mind what they have to work with. You go in and work with what they have to work with. Not goin' in with your background and your values. You have to deal with them and what they have. What they have and what they have to work with...a lot of the patients don't have resources, don't have insurance or jobs that pay well. So you do a lot of knocking on doors and begging for stuff that's free or little or nothin'. People do come
through for us."

It is not always easy. Ms. Netha expanded on the problem: You give a person a prescription and you tell

them to go fill the prescription. They may scrape up enough money to fill the prescription, but a lot of medicines say "Eat before you take your medication." You don't even have food to eat. Feed me first. Den give me my Prescription. The skills and knowledge the women possess are generously shared with other parents. The clinic is only one community institution which facilitates such sharing. Another is the church.

Church In'

Throughout our conversations, the women talked again and again about their involvement in the church. Two important functions of the church for these women were that it is first an educational institution and second that it provides moral and spiritual support to parents who struggle to do the best they can raising their children. In the following excerpts from our conversations, these two points are made.

Marilyn: "My children learned how to stand in front of a group and make presentations. This developed oratorical skills like role playing. Often announcements are read, not placed on a bulletin. Often it's children who do that. They have to learn to plan the programs. "

Teresa: "We tell them this is their chance to read without being criticized."

Marilyn: "There's a superintendent and secretary in our Sunday School. So we assign a young person to an adult who is in the position and eventually the adult moves out of the role. The child then performs the duties above. This develops skills in conducting meetings and listening and writing skills. I had this experience and so have both my children. "

Barbara: "When you say young person, about what

age?"

Marilyn: "My son started about age 12. His position was called junior superintendent. You will find this occurring in many southern Black churches regardless of denomination."

Barbara: "So the young people serve as an apprentice."

Marilyn: "As the superintendent, something that they are getting that they may not realize until later is that they are learning oratorical skills and how to conduct meetings. For example, in our particular denomination, Primitive Baptist, the Roberts Rules of Order is used to open and close Sunday School in a general assembly. A lot of parents probably don't realize their children are learning these skills." In a separate conversation, Emma described a difficult situation that her prayer group at church helped her resolve. Here is her account of the problem and the solution:

Emma: We've always taught our kids that you cannot ask me omething that you've already asked your Dad and gotten a "no." So my kids know which one to ask. I always tease 'em that, I keep on tellin' 'em that as long as I'm happy then everybody in the family will be happy. Because if I go back in that room and close that door and cry to your Daddy , he's goin' to come out and kill you.

Kenny played in a band and they wanted to go to Washington, D.C. It was goin' to cost a nice little chunk. I said, "We can afford it. Carl kept on sayin', "He's not makin' good grades, he's not putin' forth an effort." I went back in the room and I cried and when I came out Carl said, "All right, we goin' to send him, but it's goin' to make him a sorry man."

After all that, we had a prayer meetin' at the church. They said, he didn't deserve to go, it was makin' him sorry. So I told him "no." So he said, "OK." But he understood the concept.

Barbara: So he didn't go to Washington?

Emma: He didn't go to Washington. Not only does the church support the function of the parents I talked to, but also it is recognized by the employees of the clinic as a significant resource for their clientele. The women use this network as a principal means to assist their own children as well as their clients to achieve physical, mental and spiritual health. The instructional "strategy" involves situating patients in a supporting network, of which the church and clinic are critical links. The church and the clinic are two community institutions that form part of the parent network. They are places where parents teach and where parents learn.

A new meaning of "family"

As a result of my conversations with the women at Bond and my observations I began to realize that the traditional meaning of "family" may not be appropriate to describe the African Americans. "Parents" are not necessarily a biological mother or father. Families are more than a group of individuals who live in a particular house. The U.S. Census defines family as "those persons who are related to each other by blood, marriage, or adoption and who share the same household." It is hardly sufficient to describe the families the women in this study talked about. Perhaps the most inclusive and meaningful definition of family is from Karenga (1982) who says, it is "ways of teaching, structuring, validating, changing and expanding social behavior and relationships".

In my search for information about families, one of the most interesting discoveries was that African American families are indeed different from white American families but when compared with families in other cultures of the world, African Americans look much more like the other families than do white American families (Burgess, 1980; Bornstein, 1991; Saran, 1985). The women's experiences with children and families, shared through their stories, offer educators some valuable strategies for strengthening ties with African American families.

Strengthening Ties With Families: Summaries and Recommendations

The stories of the women in this study reveal a host of resources that can be used to support educational endeavors. Educators can adopt/adapt some of their educational tools and techniques. Strengthening ties begins with good communication skills. Listening is one such skill. It is easy to listen to stories and they are a common means of expressing one's self in many cultures. Stories are a natural, nonthreatening way to share and compare experiences. Listening builds self-esteem and demonstrates respect. Many parents remember school as a hostile place where they were neither wanted nor respected.

Ms. Netha explained to me: You might could talk better with the educated parent than you can with the other parents. When you git somebody that's not educated themselves, low self-esteem, and you well-dressed and they don't have dress and you goin' to tell them some thin' about their chil'ren, then they git a cocky attitude. Then they start actin' like a nut.

As educators, we need to do more listening. In

addition to taking time to hear family stories, invite community leaders to speak--listen to the way that they communicate with their followers. Identify ways to communicate instead of sending home "Dear Parent" notes. Proverbs are a way to communicate that can enrich everyone's learning and enhance communication.

Remember that in many cases, like Ms. Netha, the primary caregiver may be someone other than a parent. Go into the community--don't always expect them to come to the school. Visit their homes or hold meetings in their community centers. A major concern of educators should be to become familiar with existing networks and use them to support educational undertakings.

Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to the women at the Bond Clinic in Tallahassee, Florida for sharing their stories with me and allowing me to give them full credit by using their real names.

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READING DEPENDS ON EXPERIENCES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO TALK ABOUT THOSE EXPERIENCES

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What I'm going to do today is involve you in an exercise to help you understand, perhaps more fully than you already do, why it is so important for parents and the rest of us to provide children with lots of experiences and opportunities.

This exercise is based upon some recommendations that were published in 1984 in a report from the National Commission on Reading. They have suggestions about things that are crucial and essential to developing reading ability--three of which pertain to this exercise I'm going to take you through today. We need to help children acquire a wide range of knowledge, we need to listen to children talk about their experiences, and we need to encourage children to think. So I want you to keep that in mind as I take you through this exercise. Let's reflect upon it afterwards.

This exercise involves a little food, which I thought might be appropriate this time of day. So I'm going to give you each an apple and for the moment let's suspend our knowledge about the apple. Make believe that this is our first experience with an apple.

What I'd like for you to do now with me is look at this object I've given you and give me information about what you're experiencing, as you look at it, as you touch it--words that come to mind.

"Smooth", OK, "Hard", "Cool", "feels cool", "Funny Shaped", "It has a stick in it", "it smells good". I also brought a pocket-knife if anybody wants to cut one open and see if you can figure anything out--anything to add to our list--that you can discover and experience with this. "Mine has a hole in it". Yours has a hole in it, "a little worm". I've got some others. "There's a flower, or a bud at the bottom end of it".

Anybody want to cut their's open to see what's inside? Let me add "juicy" to my list. What about "beauty"--just to look at it, it's such an exquisite piece of art. OK. He said it had a flower-- did you say flower inside? Some kind of bud or something. OK. "There's a seed in it." You found seeds in yours? OK. "And it's heart shaped when it's cut". Anything else we want to add to our list. "You can twirl it". That's a pretty good list.

I bet we could probably go on and on and find more and more things with this inquisitive group. Now, I want you to consider this picture representation of the object. And, I want you to tell me which things on our list do I need to cross out, if this is the only representation we have of the object.

What can you tell from looking at this representation? Not much. "It's got a stick in it". It's smooth, but do we know how smooth? Some people say yes and some no. "not unless you feel it." Then do you think we could keep smooth on our list? "I would say that's not possible". Even if it was smooth, could you tell

that the object was smooth, if this was all you had to go by? If this was presented to you on a worksheet or in a story book, can you tell that about the thing that this picture represents? No . . . so we have to cross this out.

Can we tell that it's red? "No". Can we tell that it's hard, "No". Can we tell that it's cool, "No". Can we tell that it's got a funny shape, "Yes". "Not really, that one doesn't, it's symmetrical, now this one's got a kind of funny shape and it's not as symmetrical, but it's not really funny, "I agree with that". We've got mixed opinions. I'm going to put a question mark.

What about shiny, can you tell from this that it's a shiny thing? "No". Stick in it, "Yes". How about that it smells good, "No". Hole in it, "No". Juicy, "No". Beauty, "No". (There is discussion on beauty amongst the group). How about the bud at the bottom, can we see it? "No". Seeds inside? "No". Heart shaped when cut in half, "No". You can twirl it like a top, "No". We're only left with the possibilities that maybe we know it's funny shaped, and has a stick in it, and it might be beautiful to some people.

Now, let's take it one step further. Let's say that this is the only representation we have now (the word "apple"). On our list, we would have to cancel everything out wouldn't we? Well, what I'm trying to show you here is that when children come to school, and they are presented with worksheets with pictures and words they're supposed to look at 5 letters (apple) and relate it to the rich understanding of apple that you listed today. If they haven't had experiences like the one we just had, if they haven't talked about the experience, they're not going to bring much to these abstract representations. Pictures and

words would be meaningless, empty representations. This [word--apple] is a very simple thing.

I'll just take this further. Think about sentences like "The man is digging a hole for the tree". If you haven't ever dug a hole for a tree, talked about the things you need to do it, how to get involved in it, when you read that sentence, you're not going to have an experience relate to it.

This may seem extremely obvious. However, in working with preservice teachers, undergraduate students, I find that it comes as quite a surprise to them how important our fund of prior knowledge or world knowledge is to reading. If you come from a situation where people don't talk and listen to you, don't take you places, don't explain things to you, don't listen to your understanding of the world, don't let you try out your understanding of the world. Then you're at a trememdous disadvantage when you're faced with story books, illustrations and words that you're expected to construct meaningful understandings of.

What I think we need is simply to encourage parents to listen more to their children and do more things with them. I know that finding time is really difficult in this day and age, but without that, children come to school at a disadvantage.

ABCs of PARENTHOOD

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Living in a fast paced world as ours is today, we can see why our youth are faced with so many problems. But, they are not to be blamed. Parents and teachers are so concerned with their own problems, whether they be emotional, social, or financial, until the child is not being given a clear picture of what is expected of them. I believe that parents and teachers are sending mixed signals and along the way our children are getting lost.

Children need to know whether you expect them to be children or miniature adults. They are allowed to make decisions on their own because you may feel that they are old enough to make the right choice. But, when the right one is not chosen they are blamed. Children need limits. When you know it is not in the best of interest for the child say No. Tell the child why and stick to your decision. It is always better to be safe than sorry.

Children need both parents and teachers to, first, respect them and, second, to listen. So many times a child may have something on his mind but may be afraid to talk about it , for fear that no one will understand or care. I recently had a conversation with my 13 year old qrandson whom I asked what are some of the problems that are troubling teens today? His reply was not unusual for a preteen. He

said peer pressure was at the top of the list. He also said stress from the teachers. I asked him to explain. "You see Grandma, teachers who have been teaching for a long time think they know all the answers to today's problems and what's on our minds, but, they don't. Because, they have not kept up with the times." "Times have changed!" Yes times have changed. We knew what we could and couldn't do and what the consequence was if we did.

I think sometimes parents and teachers forget what it was like to be a child. but, maybe if we put ourselves in their shoes for a few seconds, we could make mending the gap between childhood and parenthood a little easier.

Here are a few signals to help make the crossing a little smoother:

ABC'S OF PARENTHOOD

A - Always find some time exclusively for your children each day.
B - Broaden their horizons through varied experiences.
C - Challenge them to set and achieve high goals in life.
D - Delight in their efforts in school and at home.
E - Examine your approach so as to keep it loving.
G - Guide them in their decisions.
H - Have a listening ear for their problems and concerns.
I - Insure that you pay attention to their fears.
J - Joyfully forgive their short comings.
K - Keep their confidence.
L - Live a life that serves as a positive model.
M - Manage your time so as to make them your best friend.
N - Never say "no" when you might be able to say "yes".
O - Open your home to their friends.

P - Protect them from their own inexperience.
Q - Quickly show interest in their endeavors.
R - Remember that they have needs to be met.
S - Show them love.
T - Teach them to treat others as they want to be treated.
U - Understand they are young and learning to adjust.
V - Very carefully, mean what you say.
W - Watch them grow and appreciate each stage.
X - Expect them to follow rules.
Y - Yield to your children's preferences, if it isn't against a principle.
Z - Zealously help your child to enjoy life.

SCHOOL CLIMATE: THE EMPOWERMENT OF PARENTS, STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

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Prince George's County Schools

A school's climate is its atmosphere for learning. It includes the feelings people have about school and whether it is a place where learning can occur. A positive climate makes a school a place where both staff and students want to spend a substantial portion of their time; it is a good place to be.

There are a number of factors that must occur and contribute to the aura of good feelings that exist and contribute to a school's climate and help to determine its quality. Howard (1987) describes these factors as:

1. Continuous Academic and Social Growth - Each student is developing academically, socially and physically in skills and knowledge. Faculty, too, are improving skills and knowledge with regard to their assignments and as cooperative members of the education team.

2. Self Respect - Students see themselves as persons of worth; their ideas and feelings are respected. Teachers, parents, and administrators should also feel the same way. An atmosphere of mutual respect must prevail.

3. Trust - Trust is having confidence that others can be counted on to do what they say they will do.

4. Cohesiveness - It is often called school spirit or esprit

de corps. People feel a sense of belonging to the school.
5. High Morale - People feel good about what is happening. They are willing to perform assigned tasks; they are confident and cheerful. A defeatist attitude does not exist.
6. Opportunities for Input - Not everyone can be involved in making the decisions required in running a school's programs. But every person wants the opportunity to contribute ideas and know they have been considered.

When people feel they have no voice, it diminishes their self-esteem and deprives the school of their influence.
7. School Renewal - The school is self-renewing; it is growing, developing and changing. Research on effective schools indicates that in such schools the staff is confident of their ability to change, improve, and manage the learning environment.
8. Caring - Individuals in the school feel that some other persons are concerned about them. People are interested in each other. Teachers feel that the principal cares about them. The principal knows that the staff understands the pressures of the job and will help if they can.

Empowerment gives one the power or ability to reform, remake, reconstruct or redo that which is done. In education as in life, there are times when changes are necessary and no time is better than the present for educators, parents and students to empower themselves and prepare for a new era of education.

In order to empower teachers in this new perception of education, the disparities of power between teachers and administrators in some schools must be eradicated and the teacher should be made to feel that he/she is a major part of the learning process. For years now, teachers have

been told the amount of time they are to spend with each class-say, fifty-five minutes, five times a week. Even though they are expected to be competent scholars, they are rarely trusted with the selection of texts and teaching materials they are to use. Teachers are rarely consulted, about the rules and regulations governing the life of their school. Rarely do they have any influence over who their immediate colleagues will be; this is decided "downtown".

"Teaching often lacks a sense of ownership, a sense among teachers Working together that the school is theirs, and that its future and their reputation are indistinguishable. Hired hands own nothing, are told what to do, and have little stake in their enterprises. Teachers are often treated like hired hands" (Gregory, 1987).

If teachers are to be empowered, it should be recognized that they now probably have better training than current conditions permit them to use, yet limits are placed on the complexity of situations in which they are expected to perform. Teachers also must meet higher standards determined by competency testing, and should expect to receive significantly higher salaries, a longer teaching year and a career ladder culminating in master teacher status.

The needs of teachers and the demands of teaching are key criteria for reforming the public schools. Good teaching requires that reasonable limits be placed on the complexity of the situation in which we expect the teaching act to be performed; it requires few enough students for the individual learning problems of each to be diagnosed and addressed. It requires time: time to think about what is most important to teach, time to discuss important issues with colleagues, and time to recharge ones psychic batteries

before the next class.

Students have changed in many ways, but they continue to be processed though the fundamentally unchanged institution of the public school. Because of medical and nutritional advances, each generation of adolescents has physically matured earlier than its predecessor; each is physically larger than its predecessor. The automobile, television, videos and computers offer many illusions of adulthood to the young. All of these factors tell adolescents that they are important, that their wishes are legitimate, and that their desires are attainable.

The school itself has contributed to this change by segregating large masses of adolescents from the adult world for significant lengths of time. In schools students are told what they should consider important. They must do as they are told and are mostly governed by someone else. Many of them are told in many subtle ways that they are insignificant.

Students can be empowered by giving them the opportunity to participate with adults in tackling problems which, adults are failing to solve by themselves.

It has been said that the "teacher is the key" to the success of any educational endeavor. There is a great deal of truth to that assertion, but we need to remember that a teacher, even a good one, cannot do it alone. Research has shown and suggests that, if the teacher is the primary key, then parents become equal partners in the education of the child.

PARENTAL EMPOWERMENT- MEANS INVOLVEMENT which leads to improved academic performance on the part of the students. The involvement of the parents, help to show that the school is important,

and that they are willing to invest their time to assure its quality. While all students benefit from parental involvement in the school, the children of those parents who are themselves involved are likely to benefit the most.

Parents become closer to their children as school becomes a shared experience, a family experience. As a result of the parents continued presence in the school, a clearer understanding of the behavior patterns of their children's age group become more apparent.

Relations between home and school, as well as between the school and community, improve as parents become involved. What goes on at school is no longer a mystery; the child's teacher is no longer just a name. The close cooperation builds support for school programs in the community--support that can be of great value in times of crisis, financial or otherwise. Good communication with the community is worth its weight in gold in today's academic environment.

Parents have the skills needed to help students in the classroom, both academically and socially. Parents need not, and should not, be limited to mundane tasks in the classroom or in other areas; they are often capable of creative thought and should be fully utilized. When fully utilized, parents report that their service to the school is rewarding, and busy teachers report that parent volunteers have lightened their workloads. Grandparents and other adults are equally able to serve and be more readily available.

Students need all the support and understanding their parents can give them, both at home and at school. Children are in a time of great physical, psychological, and emotional change. Some are young adults; others in the

same classroom are still children. No one teacher can meet all the many needs of these varied transitions, but parents and other volunteers can help to fill the gaps.

The next decade will be most crucial to the public schools of America. What we must do now is encourage those who feel the need for change and support their efforts. Assertiveness on the part of policy makers is needed, not mere acquiescence to political pressure or simple cosmetic changes that result in good public relations for superintendents. Public school policy makers must respond before dissatisfied citizens withhold their support to such an extent that an effective response is no longer possible.

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AN EDUCATION PRESCRIPTION for EACH CHILD

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I'm presently involved as the education chairman for the Chamber of Commerce and we're pushing hard for the value of education, for the mentor program, and for partnerships and for community involvement. But my passion comes from something that happened to me in first grade. It's an emotional thing, I don't want to apologize for that, it happened because I had a teacher named Ms. _____ , I didn't like Ms._____, Ms. _____ was an old lady and she was a very strict disciplinarian. If it wasn't for one kid that had a behavior problem, I would have been in deep trouble in that class. But he wasn't focused because he couldn't be still. My problem was I couldn't be heard. I became determined to be able to express myself and to get my ideas across and put them in a market place and let somebody else decide if they are right or wrong, but I am determined to be heard about how I feel.

I have done a lot of studying about children -- all the models of education. We put a lot of people through school and we got a lot of people educated. It's a universal system. It worked well in our agricultural kind of model we had in our country and an industrial model because we

had a lot of low paying jobs and we could do with education just what people do on an assembly line. Consequnetly, we get some things that are good but we have a failure rate of about 30% or better when kids go through public school.

We have had what is called a layered system although we didn't use these words. We had a command structure, a military structure for education. We have recently found out that the command type structures don't work. You can look at what happened in the Soviet Union eastern block where people had to decide from the top how many green dresses would be made and how many pairs of boots would be made. Well, they finally made them but nobody bought them because they didn't want them. The economic structure collapsed over there. The command structure collapsed.

We saw recently in Clarke County that a command structure for education collapsed because it was not in touch with the other administrators within the school system; with the teachers, or with the students or with the parents. So, we ended up with a complete collapse of the kind of system we had. I don't see that as a bad thing, I see that as an opportunity, a real opportunity for us to get down and take a different kind of look at education.

Our difficulty has been that we have not really focused really on the individual child. We have given lip service to that, we have given sentimentality to that need. The fact of the matter is that we have not focused on the individual child and what is important for the individual child, and this is where we have to decide, in education, whether we are going down one branch of the river or the other.

If I could set a pattern, here's what the pattern would be. It would be an acknowledgement of the fact that there is dignity in each individual child. They don't have the same finger prints, they don't have the same personalities, they don't have the same background and they don't have the same style of learning. I don't approve of homogeneous grouping or heterogeneous grouping, or any kind of arbitrary groupings. We're dealing with people, not objects, we're dealing with individuals. There's a better way to solve these problems. It is very simple, it is very inexpensive. There are two keys to the solution. Number 1 is friendship and number 2 is enthusiasm. You don't have to be a genius to teach a child but you have to be the child's friend, and you have to do it in an enthusiastic manner. Those two things are absolutely necessary. If you don't like children and you don't want to be friends with children, if you don't love children, and if you don't get excited about teaching, it is not going to work. Teaching involves listening and caring about an individual, knowing where they are and working with them.

Either we're going to continue with putting models out that failed along the way because we haven't listened, we haven't talked to the individual child to determine the special needs of that child. Or we can do better it with the same resources. People say you can't, but you really can. You just do things differently. You know I've eaten salad all my life but I've never seen two people who eat salad the same way. Nobody says that it has to be done one particular way except our educators and our administrators.

I don't like the word "administrators". I wish we could erase that word from the vocabulary. I would rather

use the word "enablers" because that's what we're suppose to have. The people who are in administration should be enablers not frustraters. We need to get down to the lowest level, which is actually the highest level and that's the parent and the child. There are no short cuts if we want to succeed.

Learning does not start in kindergarten, we all know that, but we don't act on it. The President knows it, Governor Clinton knows, Perot knows it, all the politicians know it, our governor knows it, our Lieutenant Governor, everybody knows that that's not where educations starts. They say that we need to get people educated and we don't need to spend any more money because we're spending enough money. Maybe true, maybe false, however it's not being spent the right way. The fact of the matter is, and all the studies show, we have answers to most of our educational problems already but we're just not drawing on what it is we need to do.

There is no question about it, the children have the foundation for life, if it is planted in their brain to be utilized in math and in language, between ages 2 and 4. How many children learn math at ages 2 to 4. How many of them learn their own language or a foreign language during that time of opportunity? There are not many, because we are not going down to the age group that really need to be educated to prevent the problem.

There is a great myth about "S", have yall ever heard that myth? This guy was destined to an eternity of pushing rocks up hill. When we start at the first grade with the child, we're pushing rocks up hill. We have burdened that child with a knapsack full of rocks, one after another, and we continue to load that thing until they're

weighted down or fall by the wayside, or maybe get through school. It's because we're not dealing with the problem early enough and using our resources the right way. We're not trying to identify each individual separately to find out what that child need.

The people at Fourth Street are doing an immaculate job of dealing with pushing rocks up hill. But they're pushing rocks up hill. It's hard to intervene after so many things have gone wrong. It gives us almost an impossible task. What I would like to see is for us to get on to our politicians, to do radical things, maybe even take the 12th grade away. Take the money we're spending on the one end and put it on the other end.

Why can't we do some things like ask some primary questions. Why do we educate children? We educate children primarily for two reasons: one is so that they can take care of themselves and second, hopefully that they can contribute something to society. That's why we educate kids, that's why we spend all of these enormous billions of dollars, primarily for those two reasons. Why don't kids learn? They don't learn because they don't see relevance, they don't see excitement, they don't find friendship. They don't learn on their own because most of the time they don't see relevance. We don't have a view of why kindergardners are in kindergarden or first graders in first grade. We don't even need that kind of structure. How nice would it be for us to be able to start off with a child at two years old, and ask "what do you want to be when you grow up." That's why they're there.

We want to talk about all these other issues and problems but the issue is what do you want to be when you grow up. Then relevance, listen to this word "relevance":

why are we learning to read? We're learning to read because in order for you to be what you want to be when you grow up, whether it be a computer scientist, a biologist, or an English teacher, you have to have these tools.

We need to have our educators to communicate with us as to why we are teaching what we are teaching and why you're learning what you're learning. We need to talk about it to some people in very concrete terms. If you want to make a salary of $40,000 a year, you can have many prospects of job opportunities. However, in order to have those job opportunities you have to have this background, and you have to have this kind of educational background because these courses were required in order for you to do that job, in order for you to make the money. If you don't want to go to school, you can have an opportunity but your opportunities are lowered, if you don't want to learn. The other factor that we have to think about is: do people have a right to fail? do people have a right to get on board? That's a very hard thing for us to talk about but it depends on whether or not we're going to consider this emphasis, where we're going to put emphasis, people should debate about whether or not you're going to have a right to fail. On the other hand we should also debate whether or not we should give funds and have funds available so that whenever someone does not want to fail, when they want to succeed, they can enter into the system from age 2 to 92, if they want to become more than what they are. What I'm saying today is that we have the tools, we know how to test children, we know that there are certain personality types, and we know that certain personality types learn in different ways. Some children

cannot sit still and have somebody talk to them like I talk to you. Other children have to have hands on. Some children can work well in large groups, some children can't. When you can spend your energy putting children in situations where they have the best opportunities to learn for themselves, then that's what I mean by <u>educational prescription for each child</u>.

UNITE: UNDERSTANDING NEEDS: INTEGRATING TEAM EFFORTS/SERVICES and COLLABORATING AGENCIES and the SCHOOL

Carrie Gantt
Fourth Street Elementary School

UNITE: (Understanding Needs: Integrating Team Efforts) began as the 1990 dream of a new school's staff - the dream of providing for the community a school which would do more than educate its children. It was, and is, a dream to create a school which was central to the community; one where services of every kind are available. Its purpose is to create collaborative partnerships which bring together health, welfare and education agencies, government agencies, and private and business sectors to enrich the lives of students and the community. **UNITE** is this process and is herewith described.

GOALS:

* to eliminate barriers which separate the school from its community.
* to cause the school to be viewed by the community as a place of help and hope.
* to raise parents' views about the caring nature of the school.
* to develop a process for collaboration between agencies which affect students and their families.

* to provide facilities for various service agencies in order to develop a closer presence in students' lives.
* to plan and implement long-term intervention strategies for developing preventive and comprehensive services for students and their families.

Rationale:

"Childhood is changing. More children are unhealthy -- physically and mentally. More children suffer from substance abuse and child abuse, from inadequate child care, and from family disorganization. More and more students from single-parent families and from minority and non-English speaking backgrounds are entering public schools that have done a good job of meeting the needs of non-middle-class, nonwhite, children. School leaders must understand how children's educational prospects are affected by their daily lives. Childhood is changing, and schools must change as well" (Kist, M. Phi delta Kappan, April, 1991). Many others are verbalizing the need for school to provide coordination and networking for total services to families. Funding for social services is down, fragmentation of social services is the result of "turf-guarding", redundant services result from lack of communication. Current systems are failing - not only themselves, but our children. There is the need to move from a reactive approach of serving students to a preventive approach. The educating of our children requires that the school, family and community assess plan and deliver instructional and support services that are appropriate to their unique needs.

Planning and Implementation:

Initially our staff determined how we would assess what the community wanted from our school. During

several community gatherings, we recorded the hopes and aspirations of parents and others regarding our school's direction.

Prior to moving into the school, and since that time, the staff of Fourth Street has utilized all information available to develop the mission of school. Because of the location of the school, the population of the school, and the "dreams" of many community members for the school, the staff and parents have developed a mission which includes not only developing students to their highest potential, but also becoming central to the community as a whole. Our vision includes becoming a center for coordinated services for the families of our students and our adjoining community.

Mission of Fourth Street Elementary School

As a vital part of the community, Fourth Street ElementarySchool exists as a catalyst to provide a supportive in which children achieve success by valuing themselves, others, and learning.

Arenas for collaborating with the community, and for opening our school to other service agencies were identified through staff planning, parent input, and community input sessions. Implementing our mission was the adhesive force for identifying acceptable services. Plans have been implemented with the following groups:

Health Services: The Clarke County Health Department assigned a registered nurse to Fourth Street Elementary School to conduct EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment) assessments on Medicaid students and their siblings. Two additional health coordinators were assigned to the project to conduct

psychosocials, provide health counseling to parents, schedule, and give follow-up assistance as needed.

The Health Club, led by Clarke County Health Department health coordinators, meets weekly after school with fourth and fifth grade students. It reinforces the Quality Core Curriculum in the areas of personal health, mental health, growth and development, family living, and self-esteem.

Child-care Services: A school-based after-school program was begun at Fourth Street Elementary School through collaboration with the Athens Junior League. A link to the Department of Family and Children's Services utilizing available child-care funds for eligible families has also been established.

Tutoring Services: Through collaboration with the community-based Athens Tutorial Program and various departments of the University of Georgia, on-site after-school tutoring services are being provided to students qrades 2 through 5 twice each week.

Counseling Services: On-site counseling was made available to Fourth Street families during afternoon and evening hours through cooperative planning with the Family Counseling Service, Inc. This year our schoolwide project allowed us to have a full time counselor on site, access to a social worker and services of a school psychologist.

Partners-In-Education: Collaboration with seven PIE agencies, University of Georgia School of Music, Reliance Electric, Environmental Protection Agency, Greenleaf Interiors, Georgia Department of Transportation, Athens Masonic Lodge #370 and Captain D's has resulted in many benefits for students. Among

these are: a school nature trail, greenhouse, quarterly music concerts, mentors for students, funds for Parent Involvement Workshop lunches, after-school Garden Club, monthly readers for classrooms, reading artifacts, BiLo Can-A-Thon, field trips, and school supplies.

Fourth Street School, in collaboration with the New York City Ballet, implemented "Storytelling Through Dance", a pilot interdisciplinary project which integrates the study of dance into language and social studies curriculum. Each spring fourth graders create and perform in ballet dances developed as part of this collaboration.

Parent Involvement: Planning for parent involvement was accomplished through a community advisory board made up of teachers, parents, PIE, and community members and agency representatives. Board planning resulted in monthly Parent Involvement Workshops, focusing on assessed needs, and utilizing community resources.

Government Agencies: Scholarships for 20 students and two touring group performances were secured through collaborative efforts with the Athens-Clarke County Department of Arts and Environmental Education. These were reciprocal benefits for use of facilities for two week-long summer camps at 4th Street.

Evaluation

Evaluation of each program has been conducted through varying means. The steering committee for schoolwide planning distributed the 4th Street Parent Report Card, which asked parents for ratings on various programs. Between 93% and 96% of the respondents rated the following services as Excellent/Satisfactory: After-School Program; Athens Tutorial Program; Mentor Program,

and Parent Involvement Workshops.

The Athens Banner-Herald, Athens' local newspaper, has written several articles and editorials about the new collaborative efforts at 4th Street. The Athens Chamber of Commerce, after hearing a presentation on UNITE, has formed a task force to utilize concepts from the 4th Street process to share with other schools.

On Thursday, May 14, 1992 the Georgia State Board of Education presented the prestigious **Award for Excellence in Schoolcommunity Relations** to Fourth Street School. This award given annually by the Georgia Board of Education honors schools and school systems that have conducted exemplary schoolcommunity programs.

UNITE is a process for developing collaborative partnerships between health, welfare and education agencies, government agencies, and private and business sectors so that students and their families can be connected with appropriate human resources to address critical needs and issues which affect them. Most of the educational programs and social services are provided at the school site.

At the center of all our social service agencies is a little person whose needs must be met; physically, mentally, and emotionally. Through interagency collaboration UNITE has produced a positive impact on our students, families, and on our community.

MEDIATING COLUMBUS' LEGACY for the BILINGUAL HISPANIC CHILD: A PARENT'S CONCERNS

Duncan Waite, Ph.D.
University of Georgia

My talk is mainly geared towards education. I also think that it holds relevance for social service workers of whatever institution, be it child services, clinical welfare, or whatever you might want to call it. And the challenge is basically, as I see it, "What about my daughter? What are you going to do in the schools for my daughter?". Look at Tamara. To lok at her, you probably wouldn't know that she was bilingual/bicultural. She looks pretty much like other children that I think you find in schools, nothing that special about her and her appearance. Only if you scratch the surface do you realize the complexity that there is to her and her sister, too.

The metaphor for the talk that I will be giving is the Columbus legacy and its meaning for the bilingual/bicultural, particularly the Hispanic, child. I would argue that it also has relevance for what you might call any child of difference: For instance your child, be s/he German-American, American-German, or Native-American, Asian American, African-American; in short, any child of difference, including the Haitian and Haitian-American, Whether it be special education children, or it

could be gifted children.

What I mean by Columbus' legacy is that this 1992 and the nation as a whole is celebrating Columbus' voyage, his first voyage. But when I try to understand Columbus' legacy, I guess it is best captured in the phrase **manifest destiny**. And **manifest destiny** to me means ignoring, I think, desensitizing oneself to others. If they are different somehow, subhuman or not human, by that logic we could, like I say, perpetuate whatever kind of atrocity. Generally, it just means rolling over those people whom we don't understand, or that we devalue in some sense.

I have come to a number of understandings, for a number of different reasons. I said already that my concern is for my five year old daughter, here, and her education. Being in the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Georgia and being concerned with issues of equity and multiculutral education has caused me to think about the representation of "minorities" within my department. I am working to enhance or facilitate "students of difference" because as I look across the graduate seminars, and I don't mean to stereotype (I would go against the premise of my talk if I did), but as I look across the students' faces in our graduate seminars--these are students who are trained for assistant principalships, jobs intjobs in the central office such as curriculum director or director of staff development, or superintendent--by far and away, actually you would be hard pressed to find a student--I guess what some people would call a "student of color"--though I take exception to that phrase.

The reason I take exception to that phrase is that I think it denies those of us who are not so defined by our

race. But it would be difficult to find an African-American, it would be difficult to find a Native-American, Hispanic American, in the classes that I teach. So I have been anxious to try to advocate, champion if you will, interest in our program by students of color. In order to even come into our program, first of all you have to become a teacher; we draw our graduate students from the ranks of teachers. Not only do you need to become a teacher, but oftentimes them you must become appointed within your school district to some sort of leadership position.

So it ocurred to me to inquire, what is the percentage of Hispanics, African-Americans, Asian-Americans and Native-Americans in the ranks of teahcers and administrators? Now I realize my interest is primarily Hispanic-Americans, because I am interested in the types of models and modeling my daughter will get as she goes through school. So what is the percentage, for instance, of Hispanic-Americans who are either teaching or in leadership positions in schools, or school systems, as principals or assistant principals. So it caused me to inquire of the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission of the Georgia Department of Education.

By chance, they had this data (see Figure 1). Now this is the data for teachers, on the first line; the second group is, as it says, student services personnel; and, the third is administrative and supervisory personnel, which is what I'm actually ultimately interested in. But, as I said, we draw our students from the ranks of teachers. So how many teachers are we looking at who are Hispanic-Americans, for instance, or Hispanic? How many teachers are on line to move into administrative positions?

Figure 1

Ethnic Count by Work Force Division for the File ga.91 07-12-1991 12:39:21

Work Force Division	Total Count	Caucasian Count	Caucasian %	Black Count	Black %	Hispanic Count	Hispanic %	Asian Count	Asian %	American Indian Count	American Indian %	Not Reported Count	Not Reported %
TEACHERS													
Kindergarten	4,636	3,807	82%	817	18%	2	0%	7	0%	1	0%	2	0%
Elem Instr Spclst	3,613	2,887	80%	707	20%	9	0%	5	0%	0	0%	5	0%
Elementary	31,893	24,609	77%	7,171	22%	34	0%	31	0%	14	0%	34	0%
Secondary	16,397	13,046	80%	3,206	20%	87	1%	34	0%	12	0%	14	0%
Vocational	4,106	3,226	79%	869	21%	4	0%	0	0%	1	0%	6	0%
Special Education	8,822	7,021	80%	1,744	20%	16	0%	14	0%	6	0%	21	0%
Subtotals:	69,467	54,596	79%	14,512	21%	152	0%	91	0%	34	0%	82	0%
STUDENT SERVICES PERSONNEL													
Elementary Counselor	718	569	79%	146	20%	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Secondary Counselor	996	725	73%	267	27%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	0%
School Psychologist	304	269	88%	33	11%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
School Psychometrist	147	131	89%	14	10%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Visiting Teacher	264	152	58%	107	41%	2	1%	2	1%	1	0%	0	0%
Other Stu Svcs Prsnl	187	141	75%	41	22%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	3	2%
Subtotals:	2,616	1,987	76%	608	23%	9	0%	3	0%	1	0%	8	0%

ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL												
Principal	1,745	1,316	75%	421	24%	2	0%	2	0%	1	0%	3	0%
Assistant Principal	1,581	1,177	74%	395	25%	1	0%	3	0%	0	0%	5	0%
Librarian	1,943	1,540	79%	397	20%	1	0%	1	0%	0	0%	4	0%
Curriculum Spclst	314	197	63%	116	37%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Dir of Curric/Instr	352	301	86%	51	14%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Community School Coord	21	19	90%	2	10%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Plant/Maint Prsnnl	30	28	93%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
Transportation Prsnnl	33	26	79%	6	18%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
Food Svc Administrator	167	153	92%	13	8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Instr Supervisor	433	374	86%	59	14%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Finance Personnel	39	33	85%	6	15%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Planning/Eval Prsnnl	39	34	87%	5	13%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Community Sel Prog Dir	15	9	60%	6	40%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Assoc or Assist Supt	168	128	76%	39	23%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Special Ed Director	159	144	91%	13	8%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%
Special Ed Consultant	125	104	83%	20	16%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Endrgtn Director	4	3	75%	1	25%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Endrgtn Consultant	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other Admin Personnel	509	402	79%	104	20%	1	0%	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Subtotals:	7,677	5,988	78%	1,655	22%	5	0%	7	0%	2	0%	20	0%
Superintendents	184	176	96%	8	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
RESA Directors	16	16	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Totals:	79,960	62,763	78%	16,783	21%	166	0%	101	0%	37	0%	110	0%

1991 Data--Certificated Workforce in Education--State of Georgia--By Race/Ethnicity

--Source: State of Georgia, Department of Education

I'll draw your attention to this. There are approximately 70 thousand (69,467 total) teachers practicing in Georgia. Of that, approximately 79 percent are European-Americans, 21 percent are African-American. Now note: zero percent Hispanic, zero percent Asian-American, and zero percent Native-American. When you look at a number like 152 Hispanics out of close to 70 thousand people, it is pretty sad to me. This also caused me to think, "Well, okay, but what does that really mean? Maybe there are no Hispanic-Americans in the state of Georgia.

I know that' s not true because I brought 2 of them with me. But I went to the U.S. census data, and they were pretty timely coming forth with that census data. Now I'm a little bit suspicious of the census data and I'll tell you why in a minute. But the census data is that roughly there are 1.7 percent Hispanic-Americans in the state of Georgia, but that's close to two percent anyway (see Figure 2). It's obviously not reflected in the teaching profession.

Here's the reason why I'm suspicious of the census data: To my knowledge, and what I know of Hispanics and the Hispanic-Americans, particularly in this country--they are the invisible culture. First of all, a large number of them are undocumented, so they wouldn't show up on the official census counts. They tend to live and share dwellings with close knit family. Extended family might occupy the same dwelling and they tend to be suspicious of officials. It is difficult, I think, again, not wishing to stereotype or lump everybody in a category, for people who are new to this country to distinguish between authorities. It is hard to know which are the people from

Figure 2

Selected Population and Housing Characteristics for Georgia: 1990

RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN	
White	4,600,148
Black	1,746,565
Percent of total population	27.0
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	13,348
Percent of total population	0.2
Asian or Pacific Islander	75,781
Percent of total population	1.2
Other race	42,374
Hispanic origin (of any race)	108,922
Percent of total population	1.7

–Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

the INS (Immigration Naturalization Service) and which are the people from the welfare office. Are they going to tell each other? Who do you trust? So generally, my feeling is that Hispanic-Americans are seriously underreported; so that 1.7 percent figure I quoted earlier from the census is probably very low.

If you look at places like Gwinnett county, Chamblee, Gainesville (a number of counties), there is an explosion of Hispanic-Americans. But as I can show you here, they are not represented in the teaching field nor are they represented in the administrative field. Look at this: for Hispanic-Americans, the number of principals--there are two out of 1800 principals in the state of Georgia, zero percent (see Figure 1). For assistant principals, there is one out 1500, zero percent. There are zero curriculum specialists, zero directors of instruction, zero community board coordinators, plant/maintenance personnel, transportation--you get the idea.

There are a number of reasons for this. One of the reasons, I think, is the fact that we as a country, as all countries do, practice exclusionary and protectionist policies. We want to protect our workers. If you want to get a certificate in a particular place, you have to go through the hoops of that place. You have to go through their universities and fulfill their requirements. Licenses and certificates do not easily translate across borders.

A person might be a professional in Mexico and come to the United States for whatever reason. (Often times, I would like to suggest, that they are innocently forced to make those decisions. I don't think that people necessarily leave their home willingly, where they are comfortable, to go to an alien climate.) As I said, people

might be professionals in Mexico and then they come to the United States and are asked to or forced to work as laborers while they, if they can afford it, go to school to gain the credentials that are necessary to operate as a professional in this country.. Although they and I have the same skills, they don't have that "diploma," they don't have the official permission to practice that skill.

After looking at our number of minorities and trying to attract minorities to my program, the program I was a part of, I saw that there were none on line. I came to the shocking realization that basically there were none on line because, basically they dropped out of school or they were pushed out of schools; the schools were not responsive to their needs. Schools were not doing them justice. That's the only way I can explain why these people weren't entering the teaching profession. Sure, all of you have heard the arguments: well, for professionals that go on, if they go on, it is such an investment that they would rather opt for some high paying profession like doctor or lawyer if they had those skills. And I think that is just a cop-out in my own opinion.

I think, basically, the answer has to be that schools aren't doing right by our kids. They aren't doing right by all of our kids, but most especially they aren't doing right by those that I have labeled children of difference, whether they be Hispanic or Hispanic-American, Jamaican or Jamaican-American, Haitian or Haitian-American, African or African-Americans, or Native-Americans. They're just not doing right by our kids!

Now, personally, I can say, that I don't really have a lot of qualms, or reservations about how well Tamara is going to do in school. She is going to succeed. I think

partially because she is not very dark, but also because she is bilingual/bicultural. She has the skills so that whe will succeed in school. I don't have to worry about her. But what about other Hispanic children? But what about our children of difference? I seriously worry.

And what I think is that, basically we have to alter schools and we have to alter how we think about schools. Now this might sound a little bit funny coming from an old school man. I've been in schools for many years and I'm an advocate for the schools, especially public schools. I do not do not think that the answer is to be found in the privatization of schools, that is, making schools private and having people pay, even if they offer scholarships or vouchers.

For a number of reasons, I think that we have to seriously examine schools. We have to examine the role of schools in our lives, we have to examine the discontinuity, if you will, the difference between the culture of the school and the culture of the home.

Let's talk about a little thing like a hyphen (-). You know what a hyphen is, right? It's that little line, that little dash, and it seems like a little thing. However, in wanting to maintain my wife's culture, in the way that we raise our children, we kept the Mexican naming tradition. (Teresa was kind enough to type it up correctly for Tamara, notice there is no hyphen in there: Tamara Waite Santibanez). Now, that's the way it should be. She has two last names. You notice we didn't give her a middle name, we thought that was enough. Try to get this into a school and they can't accept it.

First of all, I've heard stories about the violence that the Immigration Service and Naturalization Service did

to generations of immigrants. They came here and heard "Oh, I can't pronounce that name," and others just wrote it down however they wanted. People had to change their names. People are still doing that. Would you believe that it was only the Immigration and Naturalization Service that got my wife's name right when we came to the United States. They are the only institution tor organization that got it right. I'll tell you about driver's licenses, I can tell you about any number of credit cards, the hospital where Tamara was born--"it doesn't fit on our computer, sorry." My response would be, "Hey, I'm sorry, rewrite the program for the computer." You don't say that.

We expect people to adjust to our ways. And that's the way we are at school, too. We expect the children that come to our schools to adjust to what we have to offer them. It is interesting. Al Shanker, who is the president of the American Federation of Teachers, uses the analogy of the doctor. He says, "when you go to a doctor because you are feeling ill, he or she will give you a treatment and say, 'come back a week later.' You return and say, 'Sorry, doctor, that didn't do anything for me. It didn't cure me. As a matter of fact it made me feel a little bit worse.' The doctor says, I'm sorry, that wasn't right for you. It's right for most people, but it wasn't right for you. Let me try something else. Try this, if it doesn't work, come back and let me know, there's still something else we can try.'"

In schools the childrn come to us and they say, "I'm hurting, I'm having trouble with this." And what do we say? We don't even say I'm sorry." First of all we say, "No, you need to do twice as much of this". "If you can't do this kind of homework, do twice as much." Repeat the

grade. If you had no success, "Sorry you will have to do it again." We don't try anything different. We don't say, "I'm sorry." We don't say, "Try something else." We say, "the problem is you". The problem is not us. these are the schools that we have to offer. The problem is you. We blame the children for failing, or not being bale to adapt to our system. We blame the parents for not being able to access our schools. For many prents, particularly Latin-Americans, especially if they don't speak English, also for Asian-Americans, it's not proper, to my understanding, to question authorities. To go to the school and say, "Hey this isn't working for my kids, change it." Basically, they keep silent. So what happens? The children fall through the cracks, or they get an education at home. And often times what happens is that parents supplement the education at home.

My belief is that we need to offer institutions that better tailor instruction to meet the needs of the child, rather than asking the child, of the child's parents and family culture, to fit what we have to offer. . .as if it were an assembly line.

First, the issue, as I see it, is that the schools are failing our children. All of our children, not just the "different" students. I just thought of the ones that most readily came to mind: African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Native-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, as I said you can add the "at-risk" student, the gifted student, or whatever.

Number two, remember, it is not the student's fault, nor the parent's fault, that the schools fail them. Three, we must all accept the responsibility for the schooling that children receive. All of us do violence to children, their

parents, and their culture when we expect them to change, to fit what our shcools offer.

Schools and other institutions must be the ones to change. However, schools are institutions; institutions are conservative when it comes to change. What we cannot afford, I believe, is to sacrifice another generation or two of children while our schools change slowly.

I believe that there must be radical change. But remember, institutions are not monolithic. Institutions are populated and enacted by living, breathing human beings. Without the human beings in them, institutions do not have an existence when everybody leaves them. A school is a school because we go there and we do school things. After hours, a school is used for donkey bassketball. It cna be used for a bok drive. It can be used for PTO meetings. When people are there, they are oriented to doing school things. Change happens, I believe, because individuals see the need and begin to both change themselves and to call for change on a wider scale that leads to actions and remedies for school's failures.

First of all, (and I catch myself doing this) assume nothing. Do not stereotype children, groups of children, their parents or their teahcers. It is important to include the teachers too. We have to understand that teachers have good hearts and good intentions. There is a difference between racism, prejudice, stupidity, and ignorance. And I believe that, in most cases, teachers act out of good intentions. They might, however, be ignorant. To that extent, I think you can help educate them, but they should accept the responsibility for educating themselves also.

Which leads to the next point--that is to educate yourself and educate others--which is the reason why I am

here today. Sensitize yourself to the problems and issues as others see them. Learn another culture, learn another language, be a model of understanding for your children. Also, advocate both your and others' positions. Understand the normally slient, the disenfranchised, and become their advocate and support those who are doing the right thing. Get involved. Give what you can give.

I don't mean to be so pessimistic. There are rays of hope. We <u>are</u> in the era of reform.

There are some people who are doing some excellent work. And all you have to do is look around and support that work. Support even the work at the schools or the institutions. As I say, I think this is responsible, I know people in DEFACS right now, right here in Clarke County, who are starting to offer classes in Spanish, on a voluntary, first-come-first-served basis for some of the DEFACS workers who want to take it. We will see how that goes. You have to be motivated. But you'll see those little rays of hope, nourish those, nurture those. Do what you can with your time, your money, your heart. For, if you don't, then maybe I won't either, and if we don't, sho will?

And last, I say to you, please love your children more than you do your schools.

HEALTH ISSUES for ADOLESCENTS

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There is an under-utilization of physician resources by teenagers. They compromise 17 percent of the population, and account for only 11 percent of the office visits. Most office visits are for acute conditions as opposed to chronic illness or preventive care. This under utilization may reflect the overall good health of this age group. However, the National Health Examination Survey of 1976 to 1970 demonstrated twenty percent of healthy 12 to 17 year olds had undiagnosed health problems. These problems were predominately related to the rapid growth and development of this age group. There are also a number of adult problems such as hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, and carcinoma-in-situ of the cervix.

During the adolescent years (11-20) children are expected to have various health problems and concerns. Due to the poor utilization of health care facilities during this age group, quite often these concerns are not addressed or recognized. For the purpose of this discussion, the health care issues concerning adolescence will be divided into three main categories including; accidents, psychosocial problems, and sexuality.

Accidents

Violence accounts for 70 percent of all deaths by adolescents. This manifests in the form of accidents, homicides, and suicides. Accidents by far take the greatest toll.

Automobile and motorcycle accidents are the leading cause of adolescent injury. Sports injuries and accidental drownings also play a significant role. Alcohol is a factor which underlies most automobile accidents in this age group. Most of the accidents occur after 8:00 p.m. and before 4:00 a.m. in the morning. Driver education classes have been associated with increased mortality as they put more teenagers behind the wheel. A large number of the deaths are attributed to the teenagers not taking preventive measures such as wearing helmets when riding motorcycles or wearing seatbelts when riding in motor vehicles. For those teenagers who survive such accidents with residual incapacities, there is an additional problem of self-image. This is very important during the adolescent period, since poor self-image can lead to psychosocial problems.

Psychosocial Problems

The adolescent years are a time of transition between childhood and adulthood. Associated with this passsge, there are a great deal of emotional stressors. The adolescent's coping mechanisms are not fully matured. As a result, there can be all sorts of psychosocial aberrancies. The most common of these are depression, suicide, and substance abuse. Symptoms of adolescent depression include; falling school grades, increased truancy, use of alcohol and drugs, increased incidents of accidents,

boredom with life, sad looking and depressed moods, an inability to function normally, and expressions of helplessness and hopelessness. Alternatively, behavior changes such as unexplained euphoria in acting out behaviors such as promiscuity, confuse and frustrate the parents as well as mask an underlying depression.

Suicide

Suicide is the ultimate and most extreme expression of depression. Statistically, it has been increasing over the psst twenty years. Although females tend to attempt suicide or make suicidal gestures more often than males, the males are usually more successful. The most common method of suicide is by the use of medications. The medications may be the teenager's or the parent's with whom the teenager is in conflict. The chronically ill adolescent is at an increased risk, secondary to poor self image, and the usual availability of medications to commit suicide. Suicide attempts with a family history of suicide is very significant. Children who have made past suicidal gestures or attempts also are at heightened risk.

The most common place where these attempted suicide victims interface with the medical community is in the hospital or emergency room. There the acute problems, be they medical or surgical, are tended to. It is important to realize that this is only for treatment of the acute event and that some form of follow up is necessary in order to resolve the underlying problems that generated this suicide attempt in the first place. Short term hospitalization is often effective as it allows the parent and the adolescent time to look at the underlying problems generating the conflict while the adolescent is in a secure environment. Less than one third of families actually follow up with mental health

evaluations made on discharge from the emergency room.

Substance Abuse

Drugs are readily available throughout our society and it is not unlikely that during adolescence the majority of our teenagers will be exposed in one form or another. Some 90 percent of our teenagers will have experience with either marijuana or alcohol by the time they graduate high school. The use of most elicit drugs such as marijuana, LSD, PCP, heroine, and other opiates, amphetamines, barbiturates, and tranquilizers appear to have been on a decline over the past decade. Problem drugs today tend to be cocaine or its derivative crack, alcohol or cigarette smoking.

Alcohol use by high school seniors has been reported to be as high as 93 percent. Sixty-nine percent report usage of alcohol in the previous months and 5.5 percent report a daily use of the substance. Alcohol use among adolescents has increased over the past decade. This obviously poses a threat to their cognitive development and physical well-being. Physical dependence can develop in the teenager with daily use in the matter of weeks.

Problem drinking among adolescents is associated with other behavioral problems, for example, marijuana smoking and sexual intercourse. If a large portion of calories are derived from alcohol during the periods of rapid growth, the developing teenager would be deprived of the proteins necessary for normal muscle growth. As would be expected, there is a decreased ability to function in school, hold a job, or operate a motor vehicle as a result of this habit.

About 13 percent of teenagers in the United States smoke cigarettes. It appears that, whereas the population as

a whole has responded well to preventative measures and the decline in tobacco advertisements on television, teenagers are remaining somewhat unaffected by such preventive attempts. There has been slight overall decline in the amount of cigarette smoking among teenagers although not at the same pace as evident in the population as a whole. More interestingly, smoking among teenage males is showing a decline, however, smoking among female teenagers is on the increase.

There is a correlation between academic performance and cigarette smoking. Eight percent of college bound high school seniors report smoking one-half pack or more cigarettes daily compared to those 21 percent who plan not to attend college. In addition, a recent study has shown that children of mothers who smoke significant amounts of cigarettes are more likely to have increased behavioral problems and less academic achievement.

The physical problems associated with smoking are numerous. Cigarettes remain the number one cause of carbon monoxide toxicity in the United States and deprives an individual of energy needed to perform both physically and academically. Arteriosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) may be correlated with the duration of smoking. The teenager who smokes is at an increased risk of developing a heart attack, stroke, and thrombosis at an earlier age. To this end, I have seen large heart attacks in patients as young as 30 years. It is important to realize that the underlying conditions which predispose such a young person to a heart attack have developed much, much earlier, probably in his teens. For more extensive listings of the problems associated with smoking, I'll refer you to the table in the appendix.

Sexuality

Sexual intercourse is occurring at younger and younger ages. It has recently been recorded that as many as 40 percent of children under the age of twelve have had some type of sexual experience and by the age of 14, as many as 60 percent. Fewer than half of the teenagers use any form of contraception at the time of first intercourse. There is often a lag between becoming sexually active and seeking effective birth control, and this usually exceeds one year. This leads to almost 40 percent of sexually active teenagers becoming pregnant within initiating intercourse. The consequences of early sexual activity are severe. They manifest themselves in the form of increased pregnancy rates and an increased incidence of sexually transmitted disease in our teenagers.

For women ages 15 to 19, the pregnancy rate in the United States is approximately 10 percent. This represents the highest rate among developed nations. Studies done in 1978 demonstrate that there has been a five percent increase in pregnancies under the age of 15. This younger group is at an increased risk of complication from their pregnancy such as low birth weight babies, toxemia, post-partum hemorrhage, postpartum infections, and still- born infants.

Pregnancy and childbearing has a significant impact on the teenage mothers' success in life. Adolescent mothers are less likely to marry or to achieve a high school education. They are more likely to be unemployed and more likely to have a large number of children compared to women who postpone childbearing until age 20. Children born to teenage mothers have an increased risk of experiencing accidents within the home and being

hospitalized before age five.

In order for us to prevent unwanted pregnancies in our teenagers, it is important for us as parents to recognize the fact that sexual activity among teenagers is indeed on the rise and associated with this activity is, again, pregnancy. Contraception remains a mainstay of prevention of unwanted pregnancies. The various methods of contraceptives are outlined in the tables at the end of this document, but are too numerous for me to go into great detail at this time. Something new on the horizon of which we may not be 100 percent aware of would be a new form birth control called Norplant.

Norplant consists of a hormone which is much like one of the women's normal cyclic hormones that is encapsulated in a silicone shell and implanted underneath the skin of the upper arm. The benefits of Norplant is that it does not require any thought. The implants are put in at the doctor's office and require removal by a trained physician or nurse practitioner. Once implanted, they convey, almost immediately within 24 hours, protection against pregnancy. In addition, the effects of Norplant last five years and does not require taking pills daily or premeditation prior to sexual intercourse.

The main complications experienced by women who utilize Norplant is that their cycles or bleeding patterns can be unpredictable for a period of up to one year. Usually, in my experience the time is much less than that. The effects that may be seen, may be an absence of periods for several months or a prolonged periods that eventually taper off and become regular and cyclic.

The cost of this form of contraceptive may initially sound pretty expensive. Generally it, would cost

somewhere between five and six hundred dollars for this form of birth control, however if one takes into account the fact that this form of birth control lasts for five years and that if one is using the birth control pill and paying approximately $30 a month, the cost of the Norplant is met within two years. As with any form of hormonal contraceptive, the risk to the patient is much less than the risk associated with having a child.

Sexually Transmitted Disease

Teenagers have the highest rate of sexually transmitted disease of any age groups. As mentioned earlier, they are less likely to use any form of contraceptive, especially barrier methods. Those who use hormonal contraceptives have a false sense of security in that they don't always realize that they are very, very vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases.

The main types of sexually transmitted diseases are gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia, chancroid, herpes, human papilloma virus, trichomonas, and human immunodeficiency virus or HIV. The details of all these various forms of sexually transmitted diseases are too time consuming to go into at this time, however, I strongly recommend that each and everyone of you here with children or teenagers invest some time at the library and study the various manifestations of these disease processes. A couple of things, however, do deserve some highlight.

Trichosomas

This is an infection that is caused by bacteria that can cause women to have a frothy discharge. It is not unusual for a male to have an infection and be asymptomatic. Note that I said, that this is usually sexually transmitted, although it can be transmitted by other means,

however, this is rare.

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)

This is a sexually transmitted disease that is gaining more and more importance and significance in our society. This viral infection is known to be at epidemic proportions today. The human papilloma virus is responsible for warts in humans. Not all warts are the same however, and there are about 60 different subtypes. Only a few of these warts will affect the genital tract and the main importance of this virus is that it is responsible for a significant amount of morbidity in adolescents, it can have a subclinical infection, and moreover, this is an important cofactor, along with cigarette smoking, in the development of cervical carcinoma.

Several studies have shown that a woman does not develop cervical cancer without first having exposure to these warts. Along with increased sexuality in our young, we are finding increased rates of cervical cancer or precancerous changes that are occurring at earlier and earlier ages. Visual inspection alone with the naked eye is not sufficient in determining whether or not these infections are present as oft- times they require magnification and staining with a dilute solution of acetic acid (table vinegar).

Treatment of these warts usually entails some form of surgical ablation or treatment that may include either freezing, laser therapy, or excision of the abnormal of the cervical tissue. For widespread disease, often we must test with topical agents such as S-Fluorouracil. The common wisdom today says that the chances of getting a complete eradication of this virus, once it has taken hold are very low.

The take home message from this is that cervical

cancer is a sexually transmitted disease. You should also be advised although the incidence is low, the male does not come away from this unscathed, as this virus has also been associated with carcinoma of the penis and anal area.

Summary

The transition between childhood and adulthood is the time that is often marked with turmoil. These can be difficult times for both the child and the parent. In order to make this transition go smoothly, it is important to have adequate facts, good communication, and proper evaluation.

Become familiar with the various drugs and their effects, the various sexually transmitted diseases, as well as the emotional problems associated with teenagers. In your library or bookstore, you will find any number of books on home health issues. It is helpful to review the topics before initiating dialogues with your young. Often times when presented with appropriate facts in a nonconfrontational manner, teenagers will make good choices. If you prepare, your credibility will not be jeopardized.

Initiate dialogues with teenagers using open ended questions versus closed ended questions. Open ended questions are those that require more than a"yes" or "no" answer. For example, if you want to know about a child's sexual attitudes, a good way of starting out a question might be "Tell me, what are you taught in school about sex?," as opposed to, "Are you sexually active?"

Your physician can be of great value in helping with problems during this time. He or she may serve as a source of information as well as treatment. Teenagers brought in for routine evaluation examinations are usually swayed by

the physician regarding their attitudes about sex, drugs, and emotional problems. During these periods of questioning and evaluation, it is often useful if the physician and the teenager are able to talk without the parent being present. This allows the teenager a chance to gain a sense of confidence in their physician as well as a sense of independence, the latter being a value important factor in their transition.

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PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT in PREVENTING TEEN PREGNANCY

Rick Dunn
Northeast Georgia District Health Office

The only people who can really control the problem that we're having with teenage pregnancy are the parents. I can't put it any any simpler, I don't know how to make it any plainer to you. And if you don't take the time to spend with your kids, all the teachings about birth control in the world are not going to help things. It really is encumbent on parents to do what they need to do in order to prevent teenage pregnancies.

Let me give you an idea of what we face in public health and what you face as a community. Generally in public health we find teenagers from 10 to 19 years of age. At our health district we like to target people who are between ages of 10 and 17 because once you they reach 18 and 19 they're out of school. When you are 17, you're still into school, still trying to get socialized--so that's what we look at. I just want to show you some data. Let's lool at the state of Georgia. Among ten to seventeen year old pregnancy numbers, back in 1992, there were almost 13,000 pregnancies among children--ages 10 to 17.

You know when you say this in front a school of kids, even in public schools, it makes them shocked to think about 10 year olds being sexually active. But there

are children who are eight, there are children who are six and seven, who are having sex. They might not know what they are doing but they are doing it. A lot of them are being abused and they are continuing it. I used to say, when I first started, that teenage pregnancy was a multi-racial problem. I used to get in meetings and fight about that. But, as I look at what's happening to black 10 to 17 year olds, compared to white 10 to 17 year olds, I'm ready to start saying black folks have really got to get on the ball and start managing their kids.

The national figures that we're getting tell us that 60 percent of babies born to teenagers are fathered by someone who is 21 years of age or older, 60 percent. So we got a lot of so- called- adult males having intercourse with a lot of children.

And there are a lot of different reasons that teenagers get pregnant. In reality when you look at the overall national rates, the rates of teenage pregnancy aren't any higher today than were in the 50's. The biggest difference between now and the 50's is that teenagers got married. Today kids don't get married. And so, therefore they are single parents, trying to manage alone, as opposed to couples trying to raise their children.

(We included abortions as part of our pregnancy count, in the state of Georgia. But, not every state does that. Some states don't count abortions as part of their teenager pregnancies, but Georgia counts spontaneous abortion, miscarriage as well as induced abortions.)

Again, kids don't get married. But there are a lot of problems associated with this and first of all it's the human cost. When we look at teenage girls across this nation 70 percent of the girls will become pregnant before

they finish high school or drop out of school. Both high schools in this county have parenting classes, where girls who have had babies can come in and get a little extra training. But at one of the high schools one of the teachers who run these parenting class told me that 75 percent of the young ladies who had gotten pregnant in that school, dropped out.

When they drop out that means that they have low job skills or no job skills which means that they're adjusting pretty much to a life of poverty. When we look at the women in this country 71 percent of the women in this country under 30 years of age who are on AFPC were teenage mothers. This spells it out for you. Poverty is basically what's awaiting these children. Now that's the human cost.

Let's look at the public cost. In 1989 the United States of America spent 25 billion dollars taking care of teenage families. The state of Georgia contributed 212 million dollars to that 25 billion. And all that paid for was basically AFDC, medicaid and food stamps. We're not talking about babies who have long term health problems, we're not talking about the baby needing child care, we're just talking about bare necessities here. We're talking about the federal deficit and if we could get this teenage pregancy problem under control we could take care of the deficit. We really could.

It's just a problem that, in my opinion, is getting worse, more and more teenagers, at are admitting that they are having sex. There was time they wouldn't even admit it. Now they're admit it. There was a survey done by the CDC which said that 66 percent of Georgia teenagers admit that they're having sex. At the health district we do a

survey in the high school, we call it Behaviorals and Risk for Teens. It's a questionnaire that they fill out anonymously. It addresses nutrition, driving safety, drug and alcohol use, and sex.

This survey I'm going to tell you about, we did in the high schools. We conducted it primarily with the 9th graders. 58 percent of the 9th graders at one of our high schools admitted to being sexually active. 88 percent of the black males in the 9th grades admitted to being sexually active. The average age of intercourse for a teenager is 13.

I have heard a teacher say that you can always tell when a kid has become sexually active, they lose interest in their work, they become rebellious, they show disrespect for the teacher. And I think this is part of our problem in the high school; why we can't thoroughly teach kids.

One of the things they call sex, is "doing the grown folks." Sex for a lot of them, makes them think they are much older. They have these bodies that say "you are an adult or at least you are becoming one." They don't have the minds or the maturity to assume adult responsibilities but they want to do adult things.

We need to take time and listen to our children and then encourage our children to do the right thing and then we will prevent some of these pregnancies.

Having babies is not the only problem. The rate of STD's amongst teenagers is astronomical and Georgia ranks 5th in the nation with sypllis and ghonnorea. Georgia has some herendous statistics when it comes to youth. We're number 1 in the Southeast when it comes to teenage pregnancy among 10 to 17 year olds, and we're number 5, overall, for 10 to 19 year olds. Then we can

look at the cases of gonnerea, and this is heavy among the teenagers. Teenagers are having unprotected sex. They all think they are super man and super woman and they're convinced that it's not going to happen to them. We have some terrible statistics when we look at what's going on. Some of the reasons for these high rates areas follows:

1. Teenagers don't think it will happen to them.
2. They don't get enough love at home (there are a lots of kids that just want a baby to love them.
3. There is incest.
4. Often, if Mom was a teenage mother, the child winds up being a teenage mother. A pattern just repeats itself.
5. Poverty has a major influence.

But . . . the bottom line is that we don't talk to our children. In one survey where they spoke to children and they talked about the relationship these children had with their parents, and how much it contributed to their being sexually active and their contraceptive use, they found that the children whose parents sat down and told their children what they expected of them were the least likely to get pregnant. And if they were sexually active they were ready to use a contraceptive. These youth said that they didn't want to disappoint their parents, or their parents had at least opened up this line of communication.

Two weeks ago, we did open house over at Clark Central. And the student council president spoke to us and he said something that knocked my socks off. He said that he had read an article that reported that, on an average, mothers speak to their children a total of 4 minutes a day, and fathers 2 minutes a day. It goes back to what Michele was saying, "how can we teach our children anything with that lack of communication going on" and that's what it all

boils down to.

Like I said, you can say what you want to about sex education in the school. Sex education begins at home.

However, in schools sex education should be about the facts of sex and the facts of pregnancy, and pregnancy prevention and diseases. When a child can see a future for him or herself and then you point out the pitfalls of that future such as pregnancy, such as drugs, and illiteracy, then a child is going to go do all they can to make sure their future and those dreams come true. As long as we don't help them dream and we don't help them have hope, they will follow whatever society throws their way, whatever evil comes their way, they will do it. And that's the problem with a lot of these kids, they have no hope.

TEENS AND DRUGS

Robyn McDonald
Consultant, Counseling/Psychology
Athens, Georgia

When I was trying to collect my thoughts and gather what I wanted to say today I had two basic fears and one of them was that I was going to look out in the audience and recognize everybody out there saying these are parents and teachers that have already heard what I have to say and I was going to have to stand up here and say, "same thing still goes, it is still happening out there and I don't have anything new to tell you." My second fear was that I was not going to give you the information that you wanted to hear, so I would like to ask you that anywhere along the line, if you've got a question you want to ask me you just interrupt and let me know. What I would like to concentrate on is telling you what I'd like to call the inside story of what teenagers have said to me. And I have to tell you that all of my information is going to be geared to teenagers because that's where I've worked, I've not worked a lot with children -- young children.

I'm telling you basically from two different experiences. One of them is when I worked at Family Council Services which many of you may have heard of, in fact many of you were here last year. You've heard Marnie Fereday speak. She runs the program I'm going to be referring to, she runs it now. I was there in the mid

80s and it was like a student assistance program, I'm sure you've heard of an Employer Assistance Program which is where people who work for a company will call an 800 number and there would be a counselor that they could talk to and they would refer you somewhere. Well, we ran one for the students. What we did was to go, into the middle schools and advertise ourselves, and teenagers who happened to have problems would come to us. There were two ways that we got referrals. One of course was from the teachers, counselors and parents.

The way we did was by putting out a publication that is no longer in print. It tells you about clusters of behaviors that will help you to recognize a teenager who is having or experiencing a lot of pain. Just like the cander, there are various clusters of things that happen to you to help you recognize that that's what's going on with you -- it is the same with behavioral problems. If you see a particular cluster of things going on then it indicates something going on with the child. For instance if the child has an addiction problem, if the child is living with someone with an addiction problem, or there is incest going on in the family, there are various behaviors that that child will display that will give that away.

We gave this out to parents and to teachers, and to the counselors in the school. That is one way that we got referrals.

The other way we got referrals was I would stand in the hall, I and the other counselors would stand in the hall and make this great big poster of this X, a red X, and we would stand right under the red X. Then in all the bathrooms as you closed the door and sat down on the pottie, there would be an X on the door that would say "if you would like to talk to somebody about something going

on in your life., see the person under the red X". That's the way we would get the message to kids.

So I began that and, then, as I developed professionally and learned a little bit more, I moved on to working at Charter Winds Hospital working with the families of teenagers on the adolescent substance abuse unit. It was basically from my personal development that I wanted to work with families, that I found out that you can't work with the child individually, that you need to work with the whole system and you need to work with the families and I needed to know how to do that. The way to do it of course is get in there and practice and find out what you're doing wrong.

When I was there I worked, not only with the families and individual family sessions, but I also did group therapy with kids every day and, with all of that, I was absolutely floored with the information that I was getting coming out of the mouths of babes about what was going on with them. But I had no way to tell anybody. This is what's happening folks, this is what's going on. So in my own mind I would write this newspaper article, now if I could really write I probably would have done it but I can't write and what I called it is "What I wish parents knew."

That's what I would like to share with you -- what I wish parents knew. Now, remember, I worked with Middle School Children closely. Even when I got to Charter Winds, and these children were put into the hospital with addiction problems, they were mostly Middle School children, some high school children of course, but that's the primary age, the middle school children.

I wish parents knew that children are now starting to smoke cigarettes in fourth grade. That when they are in the summer before the eighth grade is when they first start

to drink alcohol. Now I don't know why that is true, but it is, and I continually would ask. It got to where, any time I met any child, I started in my own head to statistically ask them "how old were you when you took your first drink?"

Now that I work with adults, in the substance abuse unit, I still ask that same question, "how old were you when you first started using?". It is fascinating though that the age is not the same, now that I'm working with adults who are addicted to alcohol and into drugs, it just does not hold true. Their addiction usually starts a little bit later, but with the adolescents that I was dealing with, it was generally the summer before the eighth grade.

They're with their older brothers and sisters and their first drink is from their own parents liquor cabinet. That's the most common incident. The second most common is when they go out with some friends, generally older friends, spend the night with them and they raid their parents' liquor cabinet, that's the second age that they're using. One of the things that I found out is the younger a child starts smoking cigarettes, the more likely they are to become addicted to alcohol and drugs, I do not know why but that seems to be statistically true. Carrie and I did a little research that indicated that that was true.

You may know, or you may not know that if you have an addicition problem there is generally a genetic predisposition within your own brain chemistry that causes you to become addicted to the alcohol or to the drug. It's not just the environment that goes around with you.

The other fascinating thing that I found out was that most kids are smoking Marlboro, I don't know why. They tell me that it is pretty high in nicotine, I really don't know. But most kids are smoking Marlboro. I did find

out that for most kids, after they start with their alcohol abuse, it is extremely common that they will pick up marijuana and think nothing of it. So your most common drug choices are marijuana and alcohol, and of course alcohol is still are biggest problem in the community. I can speak to you mostly on this area because that's where I had worked.

What they also tell us is, that the only way that they can be with their friends is to go out to the Mall and that's where they all run into each other, there is no other safe place to go. So we take our children to the Mall. They're going out the back door, and they're ridding around with their older sibblings and older people, coming back to the Mall by the time parents pick them up. The parents have no idea that they have never been at the Mall. I also found out that when they tell you that they are going to one movie, they're going into that movie theater but they're going to the X-Rated movie or the R-Rated movie, actually, and they're not going to the movies that you take them to.

I also found out that when they tell you they're spending the night with a certain friend, you better call that friend and find out where they are because 9 out of 10 that friend has called their parents and said that they're spending the night with you and those children are out all night. I also found out that the parties that these children are going to are unchaperoned, that parents do not know. Always counting on football games, of course, is the biggest scheme because a lot of parents go out of town, and the child says "that's OK, I'm going to spend the night with so and so". Well parents don't object, the child is telling everybody "there's a party at my house", and there's a party at their house while the parents are out of

town.

There are also a lot of parents in this town who will buy the liquor for the children, under the philosophy that if you're going to drink and I know you're going to drink, then I'll buy it for you and you can get drunk at home. So I suggest to parents all the time, "check it out", are the parties chaperoned and do the parents have the same basic philosophy that you do as far as what drinking is and drinking is not in terms of dealing with the child developmentally. Children should not be drinking because they're not fully developed mentally. They don't need to take any kind of substance that will slow it down even more.

The other thing that you may or may not know is that, when you start drinking alcohol or you start doing drugs you quit maturing developmentally. That's the one thing we saw with the adolescents, that's another thing I'm seeing with the adults. Take you off the substance -- you go back to the exact age that you started using, and developmentally that's the way you act. You start acting out again, you start being silly again, you do developmentally whatever you were suppose to have done at that age, and catch up now because you are older and you can catch up quicker. But you quit developing. You quit developing socially, emotionally, spiritually, and even physically when you put chemicals into your body. So these children when they are using quite early, have quit.

One of the things that I found that, I just want to share with you are some real stories about what happened to some of these parties we had. There were three girls who came to the hospital, who had attempted suicide and, as we began to talk about it more and more, these girls had gone to some of these parties that I have been talking to

you about, had gotten very drunk, had been raped, had not known that they had been raped until they went to school on Monday and everybody was teasing them about it and saying things about them. They were so ashamed, and so embarrassed, and so hurt about what had gone on with them, that they felt bad enough about themselves to seek help. These are some of the things, the behaviors of the teenagers that we are not aware of. Because we think the children are telling us the truth about what's going on and we don't check it out, we are all so busy, myself included.

Now that I have a teenager it is extremely difficult for me to remember, every time my daughter goes out, to check it out with the other parents. Do you know if she is spending the night? Is that alright with you? Make it like a social call, rather than a checking up on her type of thing, but it is pretty important to do. Any of you who work with teenagers know that teenagers think that they are old enough and they think that they're mature. But the one thing that I have found out is that they're not, they're truly not. I also need to tell you that these teenagers, and you may already know this, are having multiple sex partners. They're casual sex. Sex is certainly not treated the way it was with us, when it was something that you never talked about when you had to be going steady with a boy or you had to be engaged. But with them it's not, it is a very casual thing, it is being done very early, it is being talked about pretty openly and people are being pressured into joining the crowd and having sex and sharing your sexual experinces.

I've noticed also that they don't date the way we use to. We're used to the boy who would go to your house, meet your parents, and then you'd go out on a date. Now they're either all going out in a group and meeting

somewhere, or they're meeting that boy some where. And sometimes parents never know that their children are going out and who they are hanging out with. One of the first things that we would ask, parents when they brought their children into the hospital was "Did you know if the parents of your children's friend were home?" Without a doubt they did not know. Many times they did not approve of children that they were going out with but did not realize that as parents you have the right to say, "you may not hang out with that kid, I do not like various aspects of their behavior."

Teenagers are also very involved in alternative religions, such as cults, such as satanism, which I have done a great deal of research on because we have such experiences. It is is quite real here in this community -- some satanic dabbling, as I would like to call it.

The other thing that I would like for you to know is that these children are doing what's called, to the GP, and they are doing five finger discount, which is called shoplifting, they're picking up butane lighters and they're getting high. The children do not know that they're causing brain damage, they do not know that. They're also huffing gasoline which they do not know is causing brain damage, they do not know that's what's going on. Over and over again I saw children whose IQ had dropped ten to 20 points because of the brain damage. What they thought was fun, and what they thought -- it was a nice buz for them and a nice high -- not terribly expensive -- they had no idea how damaging it was.

I'd like to also tell you too that from sitting in group therapy and hearing these children talk, that not only is outward behavior totally out of control, they're acting out what's going on inside of them, they're very scared,

very scared, and they're very out of control inside of their own hearts and souls. These children are constantly bombarded, by the pressures, the experiences, and adult situations, they're absolutely beyond their mind's positive ability to deal with these things. Again they're not mature adults, their bodies and their social skills are what's primarily developing at this age, as you all know, and when they hit puberty then their bodies are going crazy, and their hormones are going crazy, and their social development is going crazy.

They're trying to figure out when they're going to go with who, and they play this game that many of you know from middle school, that I like to call "he said, she said, they said, we said". They all want to go to the counselor's office, all upset because he said, that she said, that they said and everybody is upset about that. But, they're practicing some social skills. However, while that's going on the brain has to take a little break, you can't develop all of your aspects of yourself at one time. So the brain is just a little bit on hold and they're maturity is a little bit on hold. That's why some of them literally can't do some geometry, they can't do some algebra, they can't do any kind of abstract stuff, they're too busy developing in these other areas and that's a little bit behind them right now.

Young people are being put into situations where they are suppose to be able to think, they're supposed to be able to problem solve and they're getting themselves into extremely dangerous situations where they don't know what to do. Plus, they do not have any experience. This is their first time experience going to a party when their parents aren't around them and they have to figure out what they are going to do. We've had a lot of experience

with that by the time that we are adults, we've done it, we've done it through trial and error and we prosper, they have not had that kind of experience. So they are very impulsive, they're very irrational, and they use poor judgement.

On top of that they think they're growing up and they'll tell you, "I'm growing up, I know what I'm doing, just leave me alone, I'm all grown up." My advice has always been to parents, do not listen to what they tell you, do not pay any attention to what comes out of their mouth, look at their actions, look at what they do. Then they tell you that everybody is doing it, please let them do it, while on the inside they're thinking, "please stop me from this". They're very out of control as I say.

These children, most of the kids that came to the hospital, behavior that was totally out of control. With the alcohol, with the drugs, skipping school, early sex, everything got totally as much out of control on the outside for them as they were out of control on the inside. One of the things that we would do is try help parents be parents again. Have them say no, have them set boundaries, empower the parents to do the things they need to do.

I can't tell you how many times I sat in therapy and the children said "I was so relieved, I really thought my parents didn't love me, they were letting me do so much." They really truly want to feel loved, they want to know what the limits are, they want to know what the rules are, they want to be protected from their own impulses, from their own inability to stop themselves, they really want to feel like they have a safe place with their parents and, with their teachers who can set the limits for them.

They really do want "no" to <u>mean</u> "no". They don't want to be able to manipulate you. When they can

manipulate the parents and teachers, then they're scared, they've got all that power and then they don't know what to do with it except to get more and more out of control. They're much of a paradox. They keep asking for the power, they are constantly setting the limit to get the power, and they're scared to death of it at the same time.

You don't have to be friends, teachers or parents, you do not have to be friends with teenagers. They have to have parents and teachers be authority with them. I don't mean, authoritarian as authorities. I mean "no," means "no" and "this is what your limit is", and "this is the consequence for crossing that limit", and if they are irrational, there is no arguing back and forth.

It's a mistake to think that we have to be friends with teenagers, they have plenty of friends. They've got their peers, they've older sibblings to be friends with them, they've got other folks. They don't need us to be their friends. They need us to help them. One of the things that I also want to tell you is that children are born learning how to manipulate the parent. It just takes smiling the right way or being nice to you, or they doing something right and they know what they need to do to make that count. So that's just the nature of the game.

The other thing that we do in counseling to try to get everything under control, is make sure that the parents are working together. Children are very skilled, especially the adolescents, the older they get the better they are at it. They go to mom to say that dad said, then they go to dad saying that mom said -- they're playing the parents against each other, so that parents would fight each other and the kid can go out and do what ever he wants to.

Let's get to the fact. Again it's that paradox, I want the power, I don't want the power, I want the power,

I don't want the power. So the first thing that we always try to do is to get the parents to work with each other and make sure the marriage is working, in order that they can work with each other and not be so busy fighting with each other on marriage issues that they can't attend to parenting issues.

It's the same issue for the school. The children will come home and say to their parents "that's the meanest teacher I've ever seen, I don't understand the way she teaches, it is awful, she is so mean, etc., etc., etc., So the parent automatically take the child's side, while, at the same time, the child is going to the teacher and saying "my mom just makes me do all the chores around the house, she just doesn't understand me, it's just awful". In the meantime the child doesn't do his homework, he tends to skip class, and gets away with whatever he wants to get away with, again -- manipulation -- I want the power, but I don't want the power. We have a dilemma.

COURT INTERVENTION: WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

Judge Steven C. Jones
Athens-Clarke County Municipal Court

There has been an increase in the number of juveniles involved in cases in the Court system. According to the latest Children in Custody (CIC) census, in 1989 there were 56,123 juveniles held in publicly run facilities. Ninety-Five percent (95%) were held on charges for delinquent offenses: eighty-eight percent (88%) were male, and eighty percent (80%) were between the ages of fourteen (14) and seventeen (17). Sixty percent (60%) of the juveniles in public custody facilities were minority youth.

An estimated thirty-nine percent (39%) of juvenile offenders confined in long-term State-operated juvenile correctional facilities in 1987 were incarcerated for having committed a violent crime. Overall, fifty-eight percent (58%) had a current or prior history of violent offenses. Among juvenile offenders with current or past histories of violence and confined in longterm State-operated facilities, forty-eight percent (48%) reported at least six (6) prior arrests and twenty-four percent (24%) reported at least three (3) prior admissions to juvenile correctional facilities.

In the adult courts (Superior, State, and Municipal Courts) there has been an increase in the number of seventeen (17) and eighteen (18) year olds in these Courts

as Defendants.

In dealing with these youth, I have found that there are three (3) common denominators in the backgrounds of these youths:

(1) Poor school performance and attendance;

(2) Lack of involvement in enrichment activities (Boys Club, Girls Club,etc.);

(3) Substance abuse.

Courts and Schools are being handed the responsibility of deciding how to deal with young people with the above problems. Courts are not designed or prepared to deal with these problems but are having to do so because parents are not getting involved. How can parents help?

- Parents need to learn ways to communicate with their children
- Parents need to become active in the PTO and go to teacher meetings
- Parents need to know what their children are doing and where they are
- Parents need to stay in contact with the schools and not wait until the child's progress report comes; and,
- Parents need to become aware of the programs available to youths.

If parents cannot afford these programs, then scholarships need to be made available to these youths through business sponsors.

In order to deal with the substance abuse problems, parents must be aware there is a substance abuse problem in the Nation, State, and County. Parents should find out some specific information such that:

A. Parents should be knowledgeable about alcohol

and drug symptoms;

B. Parents should know who their kids' friends are;

C. Parents should also know who their kids' friends' parents are.

The Courts are hoping that parents will become more involved with their children and therefore prevent Court intervention. Until the number of young people coming into the Court system is reduced, Courts are implementing programs to help with the problem.

A program implemented by the Solicitor of Athens-Clarke County and used in Municipal Court is called Pre-Trial Diversion Program. The programs is designed for first time criminal offenders which are usually young people. The Diversion Program allows the Defendant to avoid a criminal conviction and thus a criminal record. Only those charged with non-violent, non-traffic, and non-drug related offenses are allowed to enter the program.

Cases Handled Through Pretrial Diversion Through Municipal Court

1. Underage Possession/Consumption of Alcohol
2. Theft by Shoplifting (misdemeanor)
3. Public Indecency
4. Public Drunkeness
5. Hindering an Athens-Clarke County Public Official
6. Disorderly Conduct (non-violent)

The Defendant is educated and counseled in order to prevent any further contact with the Courts.

The goal of educational courses within the Diversion Program is simple and straightforward: To prevent the

Defendant from returning to the court system. If the participants can be made to understand the causes and consequences of criminal acts, they are far more likely to be avoided. Currently, educational courses are required of all participants who are charged with shoplifting, alcohol related offenses, and domestic violence. Shoplifters must attend the six (6) week "Project Turning Point" course administered by Family Counseling Services. The course covers topics ranging from the crime's impact on retailers and the public, to the consequences of future arrests. "Project Turning Point" has been utilized by many metro-area prosecutors due to its high rate of eliminating repeated offenses. Recidivism figures from those jurisdictions indicate that out of the approximately two thousand (2,000) people who have completed the course, only ten (10) have been charged with another shoplifting offense.

Any offenders who are charged with an offense which involves alcohol are required to attend one of several alcohol risk reduction programs. The University of Georgia sponsors one program for students who have been charged with alcohol offenses. The Mental Health Clinic conducts another program for non-students. Participants who are high school students attend an integrated drug and alcohol course conducted by the Family Counseling Service. All of these programs assess the level of the participants alcohol problem and offer education and treatment accordingly.

Community service assignments are commonly used in diversion cases. The assignments serve the two-fold purpose of making the Defendant repay society for criminal actions, as well as providing quality workers for much needed tasks.

From August 1, 1991, through June 30, 1992, the Pre-Trial Diversion Program has handled three Hundred

ninety (390) cases. The success of the program is shown by the following information:

Recharged with same offense: 2
Arrested on different offense: 3
Fail to complete program: 15

For the younger children, the Municipal Court of Athens-Clarke County has developed an idea of teaching them about the court system.

Members of the local bar, along with law students, and Municipal Court employees go to an elementary school or middle school and work with the kids for one hour a week for about five weeks teaching them about the law and court system.

Each class is given a case to prepare for an actual trial. Students are assigned parts to play and must learn what that part or position does in the court system. We try to give them cases they can relate to in their world.
In the Spring of 1992, the fifth grade class at Fowler Drive Elementary School was given a shoplifting case. They prepared the case and at the end of five weeks they came to the Municipal Court and tried the case.

The goal of this program is to help the students understand the court system, improve their terminology, develop their ability to follow instructions, and learn to think in a creative way. Information and statistics regarding Children in Custody were obtained from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, and the Athens-Clarke County Juvenile Court.

Information and statistics regarding the Pre-Trial Diversion Program were obtained from the Athens-Clarke County Solicitor's Office and Project Turning Point-Lacy Camp.

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF AT-RISK GIRLS

Lois Thomas-Wright
Director, YWCO Girls Club
Athens, Georgia

I was watching TV late one evening. It was about eleven o'clock that night. It was the news I was watching, channel 5. This was back in February. February the 11th, to be exact, and just before they begin to present something that is going to be on the news, they give you a preview and then break for a commercial. Well, they had said they were going to talk about what's going on with the young girls in America today. So I got my recorder out. I wanted to record this message.

They came back and they said, "The American Association of University Women Foundation found girls last behind boys in key areas such as high level math and self esteem. Self-esteem for girls dropped nearly 40 percent in twelve years in public schools compared to almost 20 percent for boys. The state also found that girls receive less attention in class and were less likely to earn scholarships based on SAT scores." That's pretty scary to me. Did you know that here, in America, every 55 seconds an infant is born to a mother who is not a high school graduate, every 21 seconds a fifteen to nineteen year old woman becomes sexually active for the first time, every 32 seconds a fifteen to nineteen year old women becomes pregnant, every 64 seconds an infant is born to a

teenage mother, every 5 seconds an infant is born to a mother who already has a child, every 35 seconds an infant is born into poverty?

These startling statistics, and more, tell us that we are in a crisis situation with our young females -- particularly those who are at risk. At risk of what? At risk of not being able to reach the potential of being happy adult citizens. They are hardened by the poverty in which they live and frustrated by the lack of attention from parents; by growing up in an environment of drugs and crime or in a community with no alternatives other than the streets: by attending schools which are failing to motivate them to their greater expectations to attain higher goals. What can we do?

First, we must identify the needs of our young girls at risk, and then make an effort to address those needs. I've broken these needs down into three categories: 1) parental support, 2) school support and 3) community support. For parental support, parents need to provide a safe nurturing environment for their young daughters. Parents, particularly mothers, set the authority for the at-risk girls that I speak of who come from single-parent homes headed by females. These mothers need to show their daughters that they care. Some of the ways of caring are: to encourage them, to praise the child's efforts and boost her self-esteem, to talk about school in a positive way, to encourage the child to go to school each day, spend quiet time with the child, talk to her especially about subjects like sex and pregnancy prevention, definitely listen carefully to what she has to say, and leave the communication lines open. Parents must get involved with the school and get to know the child's teacher. Above all, they should teach by example. The parent needs to be a

positive influence. The mother's attitude and action weighs heavily on the outcome of the attitude and action of the daughter.

For school support, schools need to provide a non-discriminating environment for these young girls. What I mean by that is the absence of sex discrimination, race discrimination, or discrimination based on their economic status or on the communities from which they come. Schools should encourage girls to obtain higher achievements in mathematics and sciences and develop programs or extra-curricular activities in these subjects that are non-intimidating and designed to accept girls on all levels. Schools need to provide programs that will help girls to develop leadership skills, provide affordable after-school programs that will promote their education and self development, and keep the communication lines open with the parents of these young girls.

For community support, first, the community has the responsibility of providing quality health education, preventive programs and activities for these young girls which address issues such as drugs and alcohol abuse. Teen pregnancy prevention should emphasize morals and abstinence. Peer pressure, hygiene, nutrition, literacy, careers, life planning and basic etiquette, should be done with the objective of enforcing self-care, increasing self esteem in young girls, and helping them to focus on a more positive and productive life.

Second, community support can be given in the area of recreation, cultural arts programs, and activities that will help these girls develop physically while promoting a competitive environment, as well as encourage team work. Outlets to express themselves artistically help relieve childhood and early-teen stress and pressures. The YWCO

Girls Club which I represent is an agency funded primarily by the United Way which has a mission of providing a structured program of educational and recreational learning experiences for low income, at-risk and underprivileged girls. The program is designed to improve self-discipline, self-esteem and living skills.

As part of the Model Cities program in 1976, the YWCO started the Girls Club out of many requests from the Athens Community to address the needs of a special group of girls. The Girls Club has expanded this program to reach approximately 600 to 700 girls annually through two types of services: the afterschool program at Fowler Drive elementary school and the Clark Middle School Program, and an 8 week summer program at Hilsman Middle School.

Although we cannot address all of the needs of our young girls at risk, we are making an effort as a community agency to address some of the needs by providing health, educational, and preventive programs and activities through the utilization of volunteer services from numerous community resource agencies such as public health agencies, hospital education departments, police departments, as well as various entrepreneurs, educators, and community leaders. In helping to meet their educational needs, we provide homework, and tutorial sessions for our after-school program at Fowler Drive. We also address recreational and cultural arts programs.

The girls who attend the YWCO Girls Club are involved in sports, recreational activities, arts and crafts, music and dance. We provide transportation services to assure good program participation. We provide transportation for those girls that remain for the after-school program that do not have any means of

transportation home. We reach as many girls as possible in the public housing developments and low income areas of Clarke County. Transportation is provided to and from the summer program site. We have over 30 different pick up and drop off locations. We use two school buses and five 15-passenger vans to provide this service.

We address their educational needs by way of field-trips. The girls experience new places to broaden their perspectives on life. We have a volunteer job placement for 12-14 year old girls. They learn good work ethics, responsibility, leadership, career choices, and exposure to local entrepreneurs, businesses and professions.

We provide scholarships to the YWCO camp in Habersham County and the Girls Club Summer Program. This is done through full or partial financial support for those girls whose families are not financially able to provide that support. Our scholarships for the YWCO camp in Habersham County are given as an incentive to those girls who have made significant achievements in the Girls Club Program and exemplify good leadership skills. We provide an avenue for parental support, and I would like to tell you about another type of program called Project Break-Away in the Athens Community.

Through a grant from Target Department Stores, the YWCO provides a weekend trip, twice a year, to the YWCO Camp in Habersham County, for young girls and their primary female caregivers. They get involved in a variety of recreational activities such as sports, canoeing, hiking, arts and crafts activities and educational activities such as developing parenting skills (for the mothers) and developing leadership skills (for the daughters). Community resource agencies and school administrators are invited to facilitate the educational activities. The program

encourages the mothers and daughters to participate as a team, meet other families, share ideas to build a strong family relationship between themselves.

In closing, I would like to say that we all have a responsibility to address the needs of our young girls at risk in whichever way we see fit. It is not an easy task, since we are faced with many other crises in America. It is certainly one we can't afford to ignore because it will determine the outcome of their leadership, the outcome of their role as mother, and the outcome of them becoming fully contributing members in our community. I leave you with these last words of Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, one of the great past presidents of Morehouse College:

> Life, it must be born in mind that the tragedy
> of life doesn't lie in not reaching your goals.
> The tragedy lies in having no goals to reach.
> It isn't a calamity to die with dreams
> unfulfilled, but it is a calamity not to dream.
> It is not a disaster to be unable to capture
> your ideas, but it is a disaster to have
> no idea to capture. It is not a disgrace
> not to reach the stars, but it is a disgrace
> to have no stars to reach for, not failure,
> but low aim is sin.

MIRRORS AND CRYSTAL BALLS: HOW MENTORING HELPS OUR CHILDREN

Trudy Bradley
Mentor Program Coordinator
Athens Area Chamber of Commerce
Clarke County Mentor Program

I would like for you to think back of one or two people who have had a real influence on your life, either as a child, teenager, or even as an adult. I thought about the same thing that I've asked you to do---and it was really hard for me to limit it to just two! There were many people who really had a big influence on me, and I never thought of them as mentors until I grew up.

One was my father. Sometimes we think that someone must be outside of the family to be a mentor. But my father was really my best mentor. He was not fortunate enough to have a higher education, however, this man never quit learning---never! Adversity-----he suffered a lot throughout his life-time, but he overcame those adversities and he taught me a lot of things along the way. He did not teach me "intentionally", but more by the way he worked to turn obstacles into advantages. By his actions and attitude he taught me that the rewards of honest work are infinite.

I enjoy working! Whether it's sweating in the yard or working at this job, I enjoy the sense of achievement they provide. My dad liked the gentle art of raising roses--

-but he also spent hours with his head under the hood of the car and came out dirty and greasy. Through seeing this enjoyment of diverse activities, he taught me to be proud of any childhood accomplishment--even in threading a worm on a hook so that a fish couldn't get it off without getting caught! So all of those little things went together to make me the person I am today. He was my cheerleader as he urged me to try new adventures and not to fall into a comfortable rut.

I remember another person who had a great impact on my growing-up years. I was in a situation that isn't typical---I lived across the street from my church's parsonage and I saw our minister in a completely different light from the majority of church members. He was not just my minister---he was my friend! He had no children of his own, but he was a friend of every child in the neighborhood, whether or not they belonged to his church. He taught us grace under pressure-he taught us tolerance---he never asked any child to do anything that he was not involved in. And he was the advocate of every child --- and this was not the most popular stance to take in many instances!

These reminiscences lead me to the title of this session---"Mirrors and Crystal Ball." When a child looks in a mirror he sees a flat image, which is a reflection of himself. When we look at kids, we see Grandpa's walk, we see them talking like their favorite TV personality, wee see them dressing like every other kid in school because they are so afraid they are going to look different---and it leads us to realize that they mirror all of the influences in their life. They are not a flat image, they mirror everything they experience. We are the same---we mirror people we admire. Unfortunately, children don't always

mirror just the good things---they mirror the bad influences also, many times.

As society changes there are many more influences with each new generation. Just think of the changes in your life and the influences that have had a great impact on you. TV has been an influence on all of us, but certainly not the same as it is on the young people of today. The quality of programming has changed so much over the years, that our kids are seeing things that we didn't know about until we were 18, but today they see it at age 10.

Also with the changes in society, parents seem to have less time to spend with their children. There are fewer stay-at-home mothers. Everyone seems to be so much busier than in generations past. Even if they are working outside the home their life-styles are completely different than just a generation ago. Because of the needs of our children to have opportunities to have positive influences in their lives, many school programs are being developed to provide those opportunities----thus the reason behind mentoring programs.

Just as a reference point perhaps you'd like to know where the work "mentor" originated. In The Odyssey when Ulysses set out on his ten-year journey, he left his son, Telemachus, in the care of his best friend. The friends duty was to make sure that Telemachus received an education and learned how to be a good citizen. The name of Ulysses' friend was MENTOR! When we know the derivation of this important title, it helps us to better know the importance of being a mentor to a child.

In the years past, I think mentors just "happened." We lived in neighborhoods that were much closer, We knew that neighbors would be aware and concerned about our behavior....they knew us---not just our names, but what

school we went to, what our hobbies were, how we were doing with our studies---and they were involved with us in our every-day lives. Today, often we do not know anything more than the name of the person who lives next door.

We grew up in much closer-knit neighborhoods where we saw business people everyday---the grocer, the barber, the druggist. We knew them by name and saw them on a regular basis...a different world than the one we live in today! Not many of us see the same person at the check-out counter from one week to the next---and we usually don't know their name if we do!

As we grew older we began to realize the influence these familiar people had on us, and how we mirrored many of their actions when we were children. Today, children mirror our actions!

Honesty: When they see an admired adult return a lost wallet to its rightful owner, they learn honesty and respect for other peoples' possessions. If they see that admired adult remove the money from the wallet and keep it for himself, they have learned a far-different lesson. And in neither instance did the adult even utter a word--but he was an influence on that child.

Patience: A child watches his mother trying patiently to teach the new baby how to walk. She picks him up a hundred times before he makes that first step, never tiring and always urging him on to try again. That child learns that patience is an important part of everything in life. But turn that lesson around---he's in the family car that is caught in a traffic jam and sees the adults acting in ways that certainly don't teach patience!

Respect: We all noticed when our parents listened to others and sought their advice. But this seems just the

opposite when we see programs on TV picture older people as someone who is not in touch with the world and as someone to laugh at.

Courtesy: A father, holding a door patiently for a string of people that seems to never end. He doesn't have an opportunity to shut the door, so he stand there until everyone passes through. A little courtesy, but a big lesson!

Manners: We say to our children, "Don't put your elbows on the table," "Don't chew with your moth full," Be sure to say 'Please and Thank you'"---but unless we practice it ourselves, it makes no difference.

Persistence: A child has a sister who must prepare for a recital. She practices and practices until the whole family feels they could play her selection--this teaches persistence, sticking to something until it is finished.

The Love of Nature: Children have a good example when they see adults spreading wildflower seeds along the median on the Atlanta Highway---and then see the results of that labor the next Spring when the seeds grow and give us a profusion of blooms to enjoy.

Children mirror people they see in authority, whether it's real or perceived authority. That authority doesn't have to be a grown-up---peers are a big influence. We must give children the ability to discern what they want to mirror and what they want to discard. They soak up everything, so we must be careful about what examples we set for them---they're watching us!

What is a Mentor? Mentors are advocates---non-academic, non-parental advocates of a child, who can help him or her achieve a potential. Some mentors are tutors. In our particular program we recruit people more to be a friend to support youth in their decisions and to help them

set goals. The program also provides a person who they can see as a success---not monetary success, but success at being productive, caring adult who gives something to the world in which he lives.

A mentor is a person that knows that praise is necessary---not unwarranted praise and not unrealistic praise that means nothing---but praise as recognition of an achievement. Even little achievements need to be recognized.

A mentor helps children set goals. At first, short-term goals that can be attained within foreseeable time. Once that is accomplished and there is success, additional and bigger goals can be tried.

A mentor always sets an example. They honor their promise to the child. In our program we ask that mentors meet with their student a minimum of 2 hours a month on school premises. When they make a promise to their students to meet with them for lunch on a specified day, they honor that promise because the child's time is just as important as the mentor's time.

A mentor is a real friend who accepts the child as an important person, accepts them as they are, and helps them along the road to adulthood.

I have asked two people to come today who are active mentors in our program. I thought you'd be interested in hearing them tell you about their relationship with their students. They both have been with their child since March of 1991, so they have a long-term relationship--and they are continuing with their students through the next year.

First is Sharon Pickett, a lawyer, who is paired with a young lady who is in middle school and will be entering high school. Ed Benson is a local businessman who is

paired with a 5th grade student who will be entering middle school.

SHARON PICKETT:

Here are a couple of things about the program in general. The children who are paired with a mentor at this point are not "at-risk" children, they can be any child in the school district. I don't want to give you the impression that we just pair mentors with a child who might drop out tomorrow, that's not the case. There are some mentors that do have a child that has some grade problems, but my child is not like that. She wants to be a lawyer, so I guess that's the main reason why she's paired with me. I began mentoring her when she was a sixth grader and now she's an eighth grader at Clarke Middle School here in Athens, and it was kind of a scary type of experience. I didn't know what to expect because I don't have any children of my own. At first there was a work shop for mentors and we talked about some things, did some role-playing, trying to figure out how to break the ice. The first thing she wanted to know was whether she could sue her parents! It was a challenge for me, but I made sure that she knew what my role was, and, also, I got her parents' names and phone number and called to introduce myself and let them know that I was not going to pose any kind of threat or challenge to their authority or try to undermine things they tell her to do. I showed her right up front that it's not my job to second guess what her parents tell her to do! I thought that they were making the right decision.

Mainly, our program is designed for us to stay on campus with the child. If you want to do something away from campus, you have to get parent's permission. We have done some things away from campus. I've taken her

out to dinner, we've been to a Georgia football game, gone to the park, to Six Flags, and sometimes we'll have dinner at my home. I promised the other day that she would get a treat, so I bought her lunch and we ate outside at the school. Each year I ask her if she wants to continue. I don't want to force myself on her. This is her last year at middle school. If she still wants to continue, I will still be her mentor. But I think I will still keep track, no matter where she goes, to make sure she's doing the right thing. I think that I know her well enough now that I can kind of tell her, "You know, I'm going to tell your parents on you!" or things like that.

This has been an interesting experience for me. I told my minister about the program and we have a program at our church that we call our "Pal Program" where we match up adults, not with their own child, but a different child, as a friend. Then we also have graduate members paired with undergraduates on Georgia's campus. So my mentorship has branched out. We are working and trying to make sure we get every child a mentor. Every child needs a mentor. It's a big task for our executive committee, but that's one of our goals, to try to increase our numbers. I'll stop now and let Mr. Benson talk about his child.

ED BENSON:

We're thankful that we are changing some lives. Our job is to get you interested in mentoring. If you like what you hear we would appreciate you talking about it, telling people about it and bringing them to Trudy at the Chamber of Commerce so that we can train them and let them be mentors.

These are our goals: 1) to have every school in

Clarke County participating in the mentor program by August 1993. We have 13 schools now participating, and there are 18 schools in the Clarke County district, so we have five to go; 2) to have 350 active mentors in the program by December 31, 1993. That's the reason that we have to ask you to talk about this and help us with it---we cannot do it by ourself; 3) to have mentors get together every quarter; 4) to have each steering committee member present a mentor sales and information program that we can use.

Now, let me tell you a little bit about my student. My young man is like Sharon's young lady---he's s smart kid. He had poor grades in the 4th grade, his mom works from 7 in the morning until 5:30 in the afternoon, his father is a tractor trailer drive---he is a latch-key kid. He's so sharp that he was bound to get in trouble, because he has the energy and enthusiasm and all that. It is an outstanding experience because, as Sharon said, I know that this kid will be different. He may not turn out to be what I want him to be, but his perspective has changed---he can see what is going on in places he has never been before. The three goals we have are: No. 1---Do better in school; No. 2---Learn more about nature, and No. 3---Learn to be more polite and courteous. He has been outstanding in his progress reports.

Really, all we are saying is that one person can make a difference. We need 11,000 mentors! We are going to try for 350 by the end of 1993. Whatever you can do for this program will be helpful to Clarke County and the Clarke County schools. If you happen to be somewhere else, start one and you will go down in history!

TRUDY BRADLEY:

Mentoring is now a nationwide thrust to provide assistance to students in achieving success in their daily lives. It is considered to be the best way to reach students and to give them the desire to be all they can be. We hope we have given you good reason to think about your role as a mentor---whether it is in a structured program such as this one, in your church, or in your day-to-day contacts with children in your neighborhood. You and the child will both be beneficiaries of your involvement. Good luck!

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SHOWING GIRLS HOW TO SHOW

Denise Mitchell
University of Georgia Student
Canine Breeder and Trainer

I am here to talk a little bit about what I do with the girls, and what they do. We consider it kind of like a hobby. It is more of a hobby to me; to them, it is more like a job. They put more into it. There were six girls. Now there are only five. We worked really hard this summer, but actually we started back in January. The first show we went to took place on January 31. I managed to take them to two shows. One was in West Palm Beach Florida. They really enjoyed it. These are girls that, probably would never have gotten any opportunity to leave the state. For five out of the six, this was their first time out of Athens, much less out of state. For them, this was something really big and something that they have really, really, put their whole heart into it.

There are three points that I want to talk about. The first one is that it really has helped their self esteem and it has helped them build a lot of character. We had one who was learning disabled. Until, I met her in Girls' Club she would get teased. Because she was learning disabled, she would have to go out to a different room in school to reading or math. She didn't stay with the average kids. Her grades did not meet the standard. She

was doing poorly and she just had a low feeling about herself--very low self-esteem. This is why I chose these girls. I thought maybe this would really help them and pull them up. On the other hand, I also have a gifted girl. The group ranges in membership from gifted all the way down to the Chapter 1. However, the girl in Chapter 1 does the best at dog shows. She can out-do 40 and 50 year old adults who have been showing for 20 years. She can take first place over them, twice a day, for three days in a row.

What does that do for a kid? It really puffed her up because she just beams now. This is her outlet. This is where she can really express herself. Her grades have improved this year. She has even been exempted from behavioral disability category. She is not in that group now and I'm very proud of her for that because we really worked hard on schoolwork as well and she does not have to go to that special class any more. We have really been working on her reading and her math and she hass just really excelled. All of the girls have excelled but she has excelled the most. Showing dogs is just something that she could just latch onto.

They all latched on to it and they have developed this great self- esteem. When we go to a show their enthusiasm just like, "attack and kill"; "we go, we solve, we take them on". You know that is their theme, or: "we went, we saw, and we kicked butt". That is exactly how they feel and it is just something, it's just really, really, a wonderful experience for me as well as them.

Another point that I wanted to make is that, a lot of them, most of them, are from low-income families and they have never been out of the state of Georgia. When people come back from Christmas holidays they say things like "We went to Virginia, we went to Maryland, we went here

and we went there". None of these girls ever went anywhere. They stayed here in Athens, or they went to grandmomma's house across town. Now they have been Florida; they have been West Palm Beach. In West Palm Beach we got to see the Braves in training, we got to see the Kennedy estates, and we got to see Doris Day's house. We got to see stuff they would never have seen here in Athens. It was just something to see them enjoying it. It made me proud. I know they were proud because when they got back from that trip, they told everyone "we went to West Palm Beach." It was something that could give them an edge with the other kids.

There are a lot of other hobbies that kids can get involved in. They don't necessarily have to pick up a dog and go to a show ring. You get the same results. They can collect stamps, or collect rocks or pictures. There are numerous hobbies and I feel that our kids should have some hobby, to devote their time to, to enhance their self-concept and enhance their learning.

I'm going to further explain how this experience has really enhanced the girl's learning. I think it can help them to fit into any situation. It can enable them to flow into a situation with ease and take on situations that they never would have been able to.

This is how I've seen that it could enhance their school work as far as hobbies go. Here's how I helped them with schcool. I said "OK! Let's get out the map. We're going on a trip next week. How many miles is it from Athens to West Palm Beach? Get out the map and figure it out. They said, "Well, we can't do it". I said, "Yes you can". Then I showed them how to do it. Then, I said, when we were sitting down making our show calendar, "OK' Let's figure out how many miles it is."

"How much is it going to be for a car rental"? They can sit down now and they can figure it out and they are eager.

First, they said, "We don't know how to do this yet." I said, "If you listen to your teacher in school, then it'll come to you. Eventually there will be a time when you've learned how to do this". And they said, "OK!, OK!" All of them have increased in math scores. This is what we did with math--we figured together--"If there are 64 dogs, what's the percentage of you taking one out of 4 places. What is your percentage? They sat down and they thought about it. I really enjoyed that. That's something I am really proud about. They had to figure out. I helped them to figure out probability--the probability of one out of 4 places.

One girls in the sixth grade said, "Well that's seventh grade math, I'm doing seventh grade math. That made me feel really good also. I really enjoy helping these kids.

There is a lot of science in this activity also. We figured out genetics. I said, "What if we are going to breed this dog to this dog"? "I gave them hypothetical gene patterns. I explained to them the recessive and the dominant gene combination formula. Then, I said, "We have got this dog and she's got this gene, and this dog has these genes and we are going to breed them." "Now what are the puppies going to look like"? They sat down and scratched their heads with their pencils, and I said, "This is science". This is why you have to have science. You need to make sure this is something you get in school. They said, "OK!, OK!" Sure enough, now, all of them are improving in science. They say, "But we're not doing genetics or anything like that. And I say, "Well, that's in high school."

I mix in a little math and science. I try to make sure that they know that showing dogs is an educational activity as well as fun--as well as a hobby. They have got to be able to tie it all together, and they do say, "OK! We'll try to work with you."

Here's another math example. I had a 100 milligram bottle of medicine. I asked, "How many milligrams do we give to a 55 pound dog"? I showed them. I went through the formula. Sure enough, even the learning disabled kid caught on. If it is something she wants to do and something she can apply to a real situation, even she can get it right. I explained it to her twice and, after that, she got it. I said, "Gosh! That's great! Here you are in learning disabled class. You aren't learning disabled are you"? "No," she said. "I'm a great kid!" And I said, "Yes you are!".

They do have to meet criteria with me. They have to pass their classes. They cannot get a U or an F on their progress report or report card. If there is an F on a progress report, they have pull it up by the end of the quarter. If they don't, they're not dismissed from the program totally. They are allowed to practice, but they cannot go to the show the whole quarter until that grade pulls up or until the progress report comes back and I see that the grade has been pulled up.

We help each other. The older girls help the younger girls and I help the older girls with their homework. I tell them to bring their books if they are having a problem. And, if I see those report cards and there's a C in science, I say, "Bring that science book so we can help you out with that problem so that you can bring that C on up because that C can go either way. It can go down or it can go up. And we need to make sure that

it goes the right way." When I've told them that, it has really been a booster.

One parent in particular, tickles me. This was the first year his child had ever been on the honor roll. He went to a dinner with his child and he couldn't believe it when the teacher cames over adn said, "Yes! _____ is just a changed student. I can't believe it. She has just changed. She's on honor roll. And he said, "Is that my child you're talking about?" I don't want to take all the credit for her turnaround. I do want to say that we probably have made a big impact on her.

I'm really strict as far as school and attitude goes. None of these kids liked each other when they came. They did not socialize with each other and two of them really did have some kind of rivalry. Now, they are like sisters; you can't separate them. I can't believe the change in the way these girls are acting. It is all unbelievable, and one of their parents says "All she talks about is the dog show." "I've got to watch my attitude or I can't go to the dog show," she says, and I say, "That is right! You have got to watch that attitude because if I hear about an attitude or discipline problem in school, then that's the same as your report card. You will not go to the dog show that quarter or until that is rectified." We have to make sure that we nip problems in the bud, and if they go through the quarter and they do bring their grades up, they are allowed to go back and go to scheduled shows.

We try to schedule the shows far in advance so that they can give everyone notice at school, and we try not to schedule many. We have two 4-day shows a year and that's when we go on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. We try to plan ahead for one in December, and one in March, so they won't miss too much school. I had

worked it out with their teachers last year and I'm going to work it out again this year. Last year they didn't get marked absent because the trip was considered a learning experience and they still did their homework. I made sure they did their homework and we turned it back in to their teachers. That worked out really well.

They have also improved their writing ability because they keep a log now of everything they do--every practice, every person they talk to at the dog shows. They have to keep a diary, and I check for punctuation and make them correct errors. I just think that it really pays off for them. It can be done for any hobby.

I can see the same applications for rock collecting. There's a lot of science in stamp collecting. There is a lot of activity that can keep them from getting into trouble. Youth can be helped to put time into something that is worthwhile and beneficial. Then they won't have time to put into something that's not really good for them.

Now, my girls have gone from where they could barely hold a conversation with an adult about the weather to where they can hold a conversation at a dog show with a 45 year old man who is a doctor. They can talk to him and hold a conversation with him, just like you or me. It doesn't make a difference. They can say "This dog here, placed third. And the man says, "Oh, I remember you!" She says, "Well, how have you all been doing? He says fine. "We have been working on this and that." They just have a Brief conversation and then they have developed a new acquaintance who is much older. Now, they, have learned that they can earn the respect of adults. I've told them, "When you learn how to do that then that's when I'm proud of you and I'm sure that's when your parents are too." They have really mastered the ease of talking with

adults. They are really good kids.

A ribbon, or a judge saying "Good job. You did a very good job" is something that really means a lot to them. Even if you don't place, maybe the judge says "You have a very nice dog and I love the way you handle it." Because somebody said "Take the strides!" They thank the judge and most of the time they are really feeding on what the judge says.

The girls ages range from 10 to 15; the youngest one is 10, the oldest one is 15. The youngest one has improved from a C to an A on her report card in math, because we helped her out with her math. She can now do it all by herself. She doesn't have to have any teachers watching over her, telling her if it is correct or not. I've enjoyed her telling me that.

This has really been a dream come true. Now, this is the first year that they will be able to show dogs at a junior showmanship. In a junior showmanship, they're competing with kids their age. Up until now, they've been competing with those who have been doing it 20 and 30 years, who really know what they are doing, and they've been taking first place.

They've enjoyed meeting new people. They've met doctors, they have met lawyers, they've met teachers. They've also met three people from different countries. Now, they like to mingle with people and they like to meet new people. They like having people tell them "Good job," and they like the smiles from the judges.

Here are all of the ribbons for just two shows that they have been involved in. All of the pink and blue are first place. So that's pretty good. That's really good. This girl is the most proud. In a class of 64 dogs, her dog took fourth place--out of 64 dogs. That means she beat out

60 dogs.

Every time the girls dogs win one, I have another made just like it and they have their own collection. I keep the original. They've won many ribbons from just two shows. Working with them has been very good. I'm very proud of them. All of these are from Ocala and West Palm Beach, Florida. It's really hard to go and win because you have to compete against the locals. Many people don't care to go that far. A lot of people do, however, and there is a lot more at stake. To win over the locals is really something. So, I am proud of them and the girls do a good job. It is a good hobby.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT from a CHURCH PERSPECTIVE

Rev. Andre Grier
Pastor
St. Mary's Baptist Church
Athens, Georgia

This is a little earlier than I normally speak. Services begin around 11:00 and I'm usually about 12:30 getting up. So if my voice is still asleep, then you'll understand. It is also the wrong day for me you see, my voice is still resting on Saturday, getting ready for Sunday morning. But however, we're glad to be here and we're happy to have had the opportunity to participate in this conference. This is our first year being involved. We had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Tomlinson, earlier this year and she was a Women Day speaker out at Saint Mary's church and we enjoyed her talk thoroughly and as a result of meeting her, I think to know Dr. Louise is to love her and we tried to stay in touch and the next thing I know I was asked to be with this program and was asked to talk with you this morning briefly about character development.

I am currently the pastor of Saint Mary's Baptist Church here in Athens Georgia. Being a pastor, being a preacher, means to always be involved, in not only the lives of young folk but the lives of folk in general. It seems that often times in good times, as well as in tragic, a preacher is usually always involved. The perspective that

I have is that dealing with all kinds of people, one of the things that we notice in the way that people handle situations, the way the people interact one with another, has a great deal to do with their character. Character is an interesting thing to look at and I want to share with you this morning a couple of things we try to do from a church perspective in developing, especially, the character of our young folk. I think the first thing to understand is that the youth of our church and of our society are not the youth of tomorrow, but they are certainly the youth of today and I believe that part of the initial problem in the development of character is that you just can't wait for one day in the future for them to spring up and be prepared to know all the things they should know to become a productive citizen -- to have all the skills and all the where-with-all, to be filled with great character and moral values.

So, this morning I want to share with you the basic principle that we try to instill at Saint Mary's through sunday school, bible study, and our youth department. I'll be the first to admit that what I'm going to share with you is nothing revoluntionary. I remember an old wise King Solomon one day saying that "nothing is new under the sun". We also know that it is not what you say all the time, it is the way that you say it. We try to put together a program that involves character development in a way that's catchy and in a way that is easy for our young folks to remember.

I believe that one of the basic principles of character that we must teach our youth is to Be Kind to one another. I call the basic needs the five B's -- the five B's of character development. All of us must learn how to be courteous and kind to everyone and it's not easy to be kind to some of the folks that I know. You may not know folks

who are always abusive, you may or may not know folks who are always inconsiderate, you may or may not know folks who are always ungrateful and people who would rather run your business than run their own. May be you don't know folks like that. But we must learn to accept people for what they are and for who they are.

One of the first commandments teach us that we must treat our neighbors as ourselves. I don't know, very many people who are unkind to themselves, who are abusive to themselves, who are deliberately ungrateful and deliberately doing things to harm themselves. So being kind is an important factor in character development.

The next one we try to concentrate on from a church perspective, of course, is being forgiven, Being Forgiving. We all must recognize that none of us are perfect. That all of us will make mistakes. Even when we have the best intentions. We must learn to have a forgiving heart. Learning to be forgiving is an important virtue in character development because when you recognize that we must forgive, then, and only then, can we understand that we must forgive in order to be forgiven. Now of course from a christian perspective, the bible teaches that in regards to forgiveness, we must forgive our brother 70 times 7. For those of you who are like myself who are not mathematicians, 70 times 7 I believe is 490 times. Now that does not mean that we are to go around with our pencil and paper in hand keeping tick marks so that we can keep up with how many times we have forgiven our brother. That's not the intent. The intent of that scripture was to show us that our creator has an unlimited nature for forgiveness towards us. We must have that same kind of attitude one for another.

The next B in character development I call Be

Thankful. Now all of us regardless of our situations, regardless of our circumstances, can find something that we can be thankful for. What I heard next door was a part of a man's story where he was thankful for all of the injunctions I believe he called it, that had happened in his life. Now there is nothing more despicable, nothing more deplorable, nothing more unnerving, nothing more sickening than a person with an attitude of ingratitude. It seems that this principle is specifically designed for young folk because young people seem to have and carry the disposition that the world owes them something just because they are here. Many of you have heard them say, as many of them will tell you, quite frankly "I didn't ask to come here". Now, sure enough, no one has to come to this world -- but nobody owes any of us anything just because we are here. Some people don't seem to know how to even fix their mouth to say "thank you", to say "I appreciate what you have done for me." Understanding the importance of being grateful will take an individual a long ways in this life. I always tell my congregation at Saint Mary's that "you cannot make people be nice to you, you can't make folks treat you kindly, you can't make folks have a benevolent attitude towards you but when they are, you ought to at least have the decency to say "thank you".

The fourth B is Being Honest. We always try to instill honesty into our congregation and especially into our youth. For it is important that we all carry ourselves in a way that is honest and fair in all of our dealings. Most of us were probably raised on the admonition that your word is your bond. This meant that if you said that you were going to do something, you would do it no matter what, regardless of what circumstances face you. But, today, we live in a world where, if two people agree on something

that they will commit themselves to doing, it's best that they have an attorney present, with the paper and the pad and a stenographer, so we can take everything down and then put it all in the form of a long contract. We must teach our young that we must honor what we say. They must say what they mean and then mean what they say. That's the injunction I was thinking about when Billy was talking a moment ago.

One of the ones I heard long time ago is that "if you said you were going to do it, you ought to do it" -- regardless of what happened after you said it, regardless of whether you changed your mind. If you say it, you ought to stick to it because your word is your bond. We always heard when we were growing up that "you know better than your word" your word is all that you had, your word helped to say something about your integrity, about your trustworthiness. Nobody wants to have any dealings with people that they know that can't be trusted.

Lastly, the B that we spend an awful lot of time on, especially from the church perspective, Being Faithful. You can't do that with your development of character without dealing with the word faith. For faith is a cornerstone upon which the church is built because the holy writ tells us that without faith it is impossible to please him. But, even without the biblical reference, all of us need to have something or somebody in which we can believe and rely upon. No man is an island, none of us live by ourselves. All of us, at one time or another in our lives, will have to trust in and believe or depend on somebody for something.

The Christian perspective teaches us that there are great rewards and benefits for being faithful. We embrace these rewards and benefits to be worthy of our faithfulness.

Even from the family perspective children must have a faith and belief in their parents. Parents must have faith and belief in their children. Parents must have faith and believe in the education system they send their children to everyday. They must have faith in the educators who stand before them, we all must learn that we need each other, we must learn to rely on and depend on one another. This conference will hopefully continue to challenge all of us who are concerned parents, who are concerned teachers, concerned individuals. We must work together and learn to have faith and confidence in one another.

I feel that the five Bs are for all of us to take heed of, in the development of the character in all of our children. I heard someone say once that of each one individual, if each one would teach one there would be none who would be lost, there would be none who would remain unreached or untaught. We leave our bible study on Wednesday nights with the saying that if every soul would help save a soul then every sole would be saved. I think all of us have a job and all of us have responsibilities to make sure that we teach these basic principles.

As I said in the beginning, I'm not revolutionary at all, but Being Kind, Being Forgiving, Being Honest and Being Faithful and having some belief in something can help mold our children, to help get them in the right direction. I think often times all the people who have been influential in my life. All of them have tried to instill these basic principles, regardless of their means or their methods. I hope that I've become a better person because of those people who have tried to instill those Bs in my life.

TASK FORCE A: HOME SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Leader: Robyn McDonald
Co-Leader: Vivian Ashley

I. Problems/Challenges

A. Change concept of "school"
B. Change concept of "PTO"
C. Legal constraints

II. Solutions

A. How do we change the concept of "school"?
1. partners in education
2. mentoring program
3. parenting workshops at business
4. revamp teacher education/training
5. challenge the colleges of education
6. business sponsored socials at their respective locations
7. neighborhood tours
8. afterschool programs
9. getting service organizations involved

B. How do we change the concept of PTO?
1. child involvement
2. newsletters, videos

3. personal phone calls to parents
4. special interest workshops
5. parent/teacher athletic events
6. parent yellow pages

C. How do we deal with the legal constraints?
1. create awareness
2. constant dialogue
3. challenge the laws
4. involvement in the political process

TASK FORCE B: COMMUNITY/SCHOOL NETWORKS

Leader: John Jeffreys
Co-Leader: Betty Mitchell

The best ways to network with the community and school are as follows:

1. Communication between parents, teachers, administrators, government, students, churches, businesses, and social organizations (like 4th Street School)

2. Commitment
   - identify issues and options
   - identify resources
   - implement Adopt-a-School programs
   - develop mentor programs
   - invest in community resources
   - increase taxes
   - volunteer

3. Time
   - be flexible about scheduling
   - donate time
   - make more time for parent/teacher meetings
   - make more time for summer programs

4. Ownership
   - instill pride in school and community
   - instill appreciation for teachers and parents

5. Leadership
   - set positive examples
   - take charge
   - act
   - encourage school officials to participate
   - be willing to take risks
   - be visionary
   - create comprehensive action plans

6. Ego - Selflessness
   - abandon turf protection
   - focus on community and child
   - look at the big picture--through the child